Practicing together: Designing with consent: Towards a new theoretical approach to the professional-led participatory design of urban space

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Abstract

Local participation is now a mainstream practice within Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. The literature review considers 'participation' as the primary lens for democratising design practice and examines how it has enabled and limited participatory design practice - pinpointing the need for further theorisation at the intersection of design professionals and local people. This study addresses this intersection by developing an interpretative model that draws on interdisciplinary concepts of informed consent. A grounded, more-than-human empirical study interprets two case studies, Aro Park in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand and Grønne Park, Superkilen in Copenhagen, Denmark. The substantive findings are presented in the form of seven episodes that follow how participatory design enables and limits the formation of informed consent. In addition, this analysis both develops and applies the theoretical model, leading to a Framework of Informed Consent. Three key synthetic insights examine why the interrelationships between design professionals, local people and the sites led to the disruption of the participatory design process and designed landscape. Theoretical, methodological, and substantive conclusions are drawn detailing opportunities for future research and practice.

Keywords: informed consent, participatory design, design practice, landscape architecture, urban design, community, public participation.

Dedication

For Florence Isla, this thesis has grown alongside you. Your creativity, tenacity and insight were, and are, my inspiration.

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Preface

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view… until you climb in his skin and walk around in it."

- Atticus Finch to his daughter, Scout, from 'To Kill a Mockingbird', by Harper Lee (1960)

This study rests on an ambition to empower design teams to engage more deeply with local communities, yet not be limited by either the designers' or local people's field of view. The approach I have taken is to build on my experience of guiding landscape and urban design teams and their clients to work with local people, bringing a perspective that draws upon the values and practices of both professional designers and local people. Professional values have been given consistent attention in the participatory design literature (Halprin, 1969; Hester, 2006; Hester, 2012; Hirsh, 2012; Richardson & Connelly, 2005; Till, 2005). Community values have received occasional attention (Arnstein, 1972) and have recently gained renewed momentum (Arler, 2008; Carr, 2012; Clausen, 2017; Egoz et al., 2018). So, is it time to consider them together?

My own perspective has been shaped by experiences over several decades on diverse design projects, from those addressing landscapes that inform national identities to community gardens that support the needs of specific close-knit groups. These experiences have grown my working knowledge of the relationship between design practice and local people, what the pragmatic philosopher Pearce describes as 'phronesis' or practice-based wisdom (Thomas, 2010). Some of that 'wisdom' was uncomfortable, for example the realisation of the inevitability of specific problems arising, and that in response, different design teams shared similar understandings with their clients and each other. Over time it became apparent that these explanations lacked the insight to shift the problems and appeared biased to the perspective of design teams. They were truths but not the whole truth.

One example was how local people challenged the future of their places as inscribed in design drawings, leading design teams to recommend that local people improve their ability to read professional plans. Yet some of those local people were themselves designers and planners, and they had noticed absences, biases and inaccuracies in how their local relationships to the place were shown. Another example was how design teams pre-empted dissonance by making their (and their client's) expectations and constraints more explicit and transparent, arguing that this would comfortably constrain local people's influence and prevent disruptions. Yet local people, even when they understood the expectations and constraints, disagreed with them. They saw how they could be overcome by using local ways of doing things. However, these local ways did not fit comfortably within design practice and local people became fatigued and frustrated trying to explain that, only to be told their behaviour meant they would be side-lined.

Then, my own insights coalesced. Working longer, sometimes years, in each place led to a growing personal unease that these were not merely local process problems. The 'process' problems appeared to be sustained. They shaped (or misshaped) the designed place and the lives of local people and aligned (or distorted) the future relationship between local people and the municipality and subsequent design teams. So morally, my advisory role could no longer be to nimbly navigate around and through disruptions, to help deliver a design that fits the client's brief. It needed to be more active and from there my overarching research concern emerged, to consider; If design participation is not inherently democratic, or even good, then how can we do better?

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Study Rationale

1.1.1 Public Participation in Design: a mainstream and contested phenomenon

Public participation is currently the primary approach to integrating design practice with local democratic practices (Agyeman & Evans, 2003; Arnstein, 1969, 1972; Calderon, 2013; Griffin et al., 2020; Hester, 2006; Hester, 2012; Knudtzon, 2018; Madanipour, 2010; Makhzoumi et al., 2011). It is now part of mainstream design, no longer a niche introduced when the design team choose, e.g., in activist or politicised settings, or as a feature of their practice's identity. The mainstreaming of public participation in design and planning is part of a widening recognition that aggregative democratic processes (like voting) and various forms of participatory democracy (where local people are empowered to directly influence a particular political decision) are suited to different democratic challenges and contexts. Practically, it is increasingly an expectation of public sector clients and a legislative requirement in several different domains (Knudtzon, 2018; Olwig, 2016). This mainstreaming is driving innovation, with the development of novel semi-autonomous "democratic arenas … at the interface of state and society" in different sectors. These arenas have become a crucible where technical and local experience fuses to form novel participative approaches (Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006, p. 1).

At a functional level, public participation is often understood as a critical corrective. It amends normative structural settings of institutional aggregative democracy that include and exclude people with particular experiences or characteristics, or from specific areas (Arnstein, 1969; Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006). Public urban design projects are an obvious place to introduce public participation, as the settings of urban design (e.g., its scale and human and non-human constituents) differ from those of institutional aggregative democracy, and the use of public spaces is acknowledged as a democratic concern.

Yet, increasingly, there are questions about the efficacy of public participation in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. Whilst noting a widespread substantial commitment to its

democratic ideals, there are significant difficulties in meeting them. This includes professionals believing their expertise is undermined by public participation and vice versa (Calderon, 2013; Carr, 2012; Knudtzon, 2018). This study will show how this relates to a gap in theorisation, identifying an opportunity to think more about the democratic interface of place, local people and design professionals. Therefore, it starts from the interdisciplinary theorisation of Informed Consent.

1.1.2 Re-theorising public participation in professional design, using interdisciplinary theory on Informed Consent

At the heart of democratic thinking is a fundamental principle: that a course of action that affects us should only be undertaken when another person has been given consent to act on our behalf (Ringen, 2009; Shea, 2012). With consent, a proxy can develop their understanding, form decisions and make just commitments on behalf of others. Democracy tends to be considered in terms of the aggregative processes of our government, for example; voting. However, the principles of democracy also guide the work of some professions, for example; doctors, lawyers, researchers and journalists. In professional practice, the concept used is Informed Consent. Informed Consent was developed to govern the relationship between professionals and laypeople (Corrigan, 2003; Shea, 2012). It is an applied methodology that articulates and responds to power asymmetries. In support of its application is an extensive body of theory including the theoretical, for example on the interrelated roles that shape consent (Kleinig, 2010), empirical studies of a particular practice, for example in relation to doctors giving cancer diagnosis (Specker Sullivan, 2017), and studies of sub-concepts, for example the processes of becoming informed (Bossert & Strech, 2017).

This research takes up the challenge of exploring the utility of Informed Consent in the context of participatory design in spatial design disciplines, particularly Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. To do so, it investigates the following Research Questions:

1. In what ways and to what extent does participatory design enable and impair the shaping of local informed consent?

2. In what ways, and to what extent is informed consent a helpful concept in understanding participatory design practices?

1.1.3 Study's relevance to the wider discipline and practice

Re-theorising public participation in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design is timely. Landscape Architecture and Urban Design became a distinct discipline relatively recently. To do so, it drew on thinking and practices from a wide range of disciplines to respond to the needs of Landscape Architects (Swaffield, 2002). This matured its paradigm – a paradigm where design scholars and practitioners are central. It is notable that as a vocational discipline, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design research continues to be responsive to professional practice. The profession's questions and concerns easily permeate research through studio teaching, professional bodies and networks, with the intention that research can be relevant and useful and thus professionally empowering (Brown & Corry, 2011; Milburn & Brown, 2003).

However, many disciplines have raised questions about the tensions inherent in mature disciplinary paradigms, noting how they can limit the field of view and render alternative perspectives marginal and irrelevant. The resultant research can be "inadequate to address complex problems" in practice (Repko, 2012, p. 39). This leads to an uncomfortable truth, that every discipline includes "strategic ignorance", where a singular (professional) perspective on a problem, and the need to sustain professional values and practices, results in blindness to injustice (Chambers, 2017, p. 22).

To achieve its goal, this study will need to identify and examine 'strategic ignorance' within Landscape Architecture and Urban Design and, in particular the phenomenon of participatory design. This study focuses on a public participation phenomenon called Participatory Design. Participatory design is studied as it self-identifies as both the practice of public participation and of design i.e. it is explicitly a practice at the intersection of local people and design teams. As such, Participatory Design assumes that professionals take account of local perspectives in their decision-making.

As explained in the preface, the study builds on phronesis from working in an advisory role on public participation in different design settings. These factors give the study wider relevance beyond the narrow confines of one type of public participation or design practice. Specifically, they highlight that the absence of public participation, explicitly using e.g., participatory design, in a particular design process does not signal an absence of a local relationship to place. Rather, public participation is always present in a project, even if the public are implicit and ignored by/absent from the formal design procedures.

1.1.4 An empirical study of two cases of participatory design within their wider contexts

This study is rooted in two academic contexts, Lincoln University in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and Copenhagen University in Denmark. These countries have their own distinct histories and normative paradigms of public participation. In Denmark, public participation is shaped by socio-democracy ideals, including formal local governance structures that devolve municipal decision-making to consensus-orientated boards convened at smaller scales, e.g., neighbourhood boards, housing area boards. Aotearoa New Zealand has taken a different approach. Until recently, a pursuit of neo-liberal agendas undermined the efforts of public participation (Cheyne, 2015). However, in recent years the IAP2 framework (International Association of Public Participation 2) has, controversially, been widely adopted by the public sector. Now, many local authorities and government agencies are signed up to this accord and require its qualifications for its engagement teams. As a result, their participation thinking, a descendant of Arnstein's seminal 'Ladder of Participation', provides the default standard for statutory and voluntary participation procedures in New Zealand (Arnstein, 1969; IAP2, 2014). This means that, in practice, government agencies and local authorities will often pre-define where on the spectrum, from manipulation to citizen control, a particular engagement process or procedure lies. This is a way of prescribing local influence in advance and taken account of during e.g., judicial reviews, when local people have challenged a process as a way to challenge a project's design.

Each country's paradigm of public participation impacts on participatory design projects. In both contexts, thinking and practice on participatory design is enabled and limited by the

statutory relationship between public institutions and their citizens. That public sector is a significant client for Landscape Architecture and Urban Design projects. Yet, at the heart of Landscape Architecture is a different relationship; the professional designer and local people. This is recognised in the strong tradition of scholarship on participatory design, as distinct from other participatory paradigms (e.g., Halprin, 1969; Hester, 2006; Liu, 1999; Parnell et al., 2002; Sanoff, 2011; Till, 2005). As described by Hoddinott et al. (2019, p. 67), designers "embrace a 'developmental' knowledge that adjusts to and grows out of the social-cultural surroundings in which the designers are situated", going on to describe how this is inhibited by the rational, institutional governance structures of public sector-led participation. So, it is clear that the public sector public participation paradigm, developed for a different context, does not align easily with what enables professional participatory design expertise. An alternate approach would be to focus on the key relationship in participatory design; the interactions between professional designers and local people. So, the approach taken here is to align democratic thinking in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design with other vocational disciplines where the core interaction is not between the public and its institutions, but between professionals and laypeople, e.g., medicine, journalism and law. This study follows that line of inquiry to explore how we can best use ideas of informed consent to re-theorise public participation in design practice.

1.2 Study overview

This study's proposition is underpinned by practice-based phronesis. So, this thesis is considered a pilot – an opening of a new gate rather than improving an existing path. This study aims to consider the ways and extent that the participatory design process has fulfilled its democratic (and social justice) brief. It will achieve this through the rigorous adaptation of concepts of informed consent, developed in a range of mature disciplines, to this novel setting of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design.

This is done using a grounded interpretative approach to two case studies of participatory design practice. Both case studies consider the interactions during a professional-led participatory design process. The cases also unpack how prior local interactions with the place

influenced the participatory design process. In addition, Case Study 2 considers how the professional-led participatory design process influenced the local interactions with the designed landscape. Therefore, the experiences of local people and their places are a primary concern.

Case Study 1 is in Aro Valley, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. The place has both public buildings and outdoor areas, replete with locally added landscape elements, from vegetable planters to a skateboard ramp, with others added by the municipality, such as benches. It also includes a popular route for cyclists and pedestrians between the residential area of Aro Valley and the adjacent city centre area, Te Aro. This place is the product of decades of community activism. Many of the place's features were developed during this activist period by local people to either prevent alternative uses (e.g., a motorway) or enable community ones (e.g., the playpark). The focus here is primarily on the participatory design process initiated in 2016, when Wellington City Council approached the Aro Valley Community Council (AVCC). The Aro Valley project aimed to improve the social justice of the area and resolve past tensions between Aro Valley and Wellington City Council (WCC).

Case Study 2 is Grønne Park, Copenhagen, Denmark. Grønne Park is part of the tripartite landscape: Superkilen. Superkilen is a high-profile, award-winning landscape in the suburb of Nørrebro in Copenhagen. It is adjacent to several residential areas, including Mjølnerparken. Mjølnerparken has been designated as a 'ghetto' by the Danish government, meaning its residents experience both social challenges and include high numbers of immigrants to Denmark. This landscape was identified for improvement via participatory design during a local participatory process that sought to consider how to transform the lives of the people of Mjølnerparken. The explicit, official intention was that Superkilen would do that. A design competition was run, which was won by a consortium of BIG Architects, Topotek Landscape Architects and Superflex artists. They proposed an augmented participatory process, 'Participation Extreme', that mitigated their concerns about standard municipal participation, and they believed it would lead to a landscape that would transform local social injustices. The research examines Grønne Park, as it is the landscape area directly adjacent to Mjølnerparken.

1.3 Thesis outline

Chapter 2 explores the theory underpinning participatory design practice to illuminate a significant gap between the existing theory and the lived experience of participatory design practice. A theoretical framework is developed, based on interdisciplinary concepts of informed consent, to analyse the case studies.

Chapter 3 examines the three main elements of the research's design, explaining its qualitative approach to interpreting two empirically grounded case studies using an interdisciplinary lens of consent. It then explains the rationale for drawing on two methodologies; Constructivist Grounded Theory to ground the analysis in the empirical context of practice, and Actor Network Theory to support the translation of a consent framework to a discipline where professionals are primarily empowered to change non-human actors (e.g., landscape elements and design drawings). Then the multiple methods used for data collection are laid out, including participant observation and interviews, semi-structured key informant interviews and documentary evidence. Finally, the analysis methods are explained, including how coding, memo-writing and diagramming were used to develop an interpretation that uses the lens of consent – which supports the evolution of the lens of consent into a novel theoretical model – *A Framework of Informed Consent.*

Chapters 4 and 5 explore the findings from the two case studies. Chapter 4 considers Case 1, Aro Valley, through three episodes that influenced consent shaping during the participatory design process, tracing those interactions back to broader local processes and prior interactions. Chapter 5 considers Case 2, Grønne Park, through four episodes that influenced consent shaping on the designed landscape, tracing those interactions back to the participatory design process. Both Chapters synthesise their findings in diagrams – using the *Framework of Informed Consent.*

Chapter 6 compares the findings from the two case studies and articulates three main insights which are related to foundational elements in the interdisciplinary theory of informed consent: those of the professional, local people, and the consented course of action. These insights highlight concerns about how participatory design engages with the local people's relationship to place, and with key design practices in particular design drawings and site practices that

form a course of action that changes a particular place. This identifies how, in the two cases, participation is both enabled and limited by the participatory design process.

Chapter 7 concludes this thesis by examining the potential of this research in re-theorising participatory design. First, by reviewing the theory developed - a '*Framework of Informed Consent'* for Landscape Architecture and Urban Design and assessing its utility to research and practice. Second, by noting methodological contributions grounded in using a more-than-human approach. Finally, this Chapter considers the substantive findings that were developed by applying the *Framework of Informed Consent* to two cases of participatory design. The outcome is concrete proposals for how to practice design better together, whilst also acknowledging this was a trial – one that signals new directions for future research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This Chapter provides a theoretical context for the participatory design of urban public places, as led by design professionals, and sets out the theoretical framework for this inquiry. The literature on participatory design has consistently focused on its applied practice (Hester, 1975, 2006, 2012; Hirsch, 2014b; Hirsh, 2012; Linn, 1968; Pena et al., 2017; Wates, 2014). Yet scholars have identified that a significant gap remains between the existing theory and the lived phenomenon of participatory design practice (Calderon, 2013; Carr, 2012).

With that in mind, Section 2.1 will consider the purposes of local people participating in the professional design process, linking it to the practical outcomes of local democracy particularly, addressing inequities and exclusions in places and within the professional design process. Section 2.2. considers the professional design process as the central practice of participatory design, and identifies critical concepts, e.g., 'site' as used by landscape architects to organise their activities, before exploring how the design process was meant to be enhanced by participation of local people. Section 2.3 develops a critique of how the conceptualisation of design, and participation, has impacted on participatory design practice. This leads to section 2.4, which explains why this study will investigate an alternative way of conceptualising participatory design as a democratic practice, through a novel interdisciplinary lens of informed consent. The theoretical components of that lens are introduced here, before being operationalised and further developed as an interpretative model in the Methodology Chapter and then examples of its implementation are shown in the Findings Chapter.

2.1 The purpose of local people participating in professional design

Public participation in the development of urban spaces is the principal, and now the mainstream, approach to democratising professional urban design. Local participation is promoted as the key to improving sustainability, utility, and justice and easing professional processes that change places (Agyeman & Evans, 2003; Arnstein, 1969, 1972, 1975; Griffin et al., 2020; Hester, 2006; Madanipour, 2010; Makhzoumi et al., 2011). There are two main

concerns - how to address inequities and exclusions within the professional design processes, and how participatory design can address inequalities and exclusions in the use of public space (Agyeman & Evans, 2003; Arnstein, 1972; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Griffin et al., 2015; Madanipour, 2010). Therefore, there are two key elements of local democracy that need to be enabled through participatory design practice: the design team's understanding of the local relationship to a place to inform the design proposal (Griffin et al., 2020; Hester, 2006; Till, 2005) and local people's shared understanding of a place, including inequalities and their care for the designed place (Arler, 2008; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Elands et al., 2018; Linn, 1968; Makhzoumi et al., 2011).

Wider recognition of the value of local participation has meant it is increasingly a mandatory and/or advisory element of planning laws, conventions, and agreements (Cheyne, 2015; Knudtzon, 2018; Kristensen & Primdahl, 2020) and so an expectation of public sector clients. However, much of this legislation focuses on participation as a technical element. The result is that the focus on 'participation' is on methods and procedures (Cheyne, 2015). Similarly, while participation is included as part of the training of design professionals (Griffin & Weimer, 2020; Rubbo, 2010; Tietjen, 2020) it also typically emphasises procedures and processes. This leaves unexamined the critical professional question of ethical and power relationships between the designers and local participants.

2.2 The development of participatory design

Interest in local participation in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design was part of wider democratic questions that emerged in the late 1950s and since then have been thoroughly pursued in a range of disciplines, including Development Studies and Politics (Chambers, 2017; Cheyne, 2015; Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006; Dryzek, 1990; Mohan & Hickey, 2004; Stenton & Cowen, 1996). In the early scholarship, there was increasing concern about how design and planning professionals could better respond to the spatial determinants of democracy - particularly urban inequality and civil rights (Arnstein, 1972; Hester, 1975; Hirsch, 2014b; Jacobs, 1992; Linn, 1968; Schuman, 2006). Professional practice responded in two ways; encouraging professionals to make close observations of how local people

interacted with their place, often drawing on adjacent fields e.g., sociology (Gehl & Svarre, 2013; Hirsch, 2014b; Jacobs, 1992; Whyte, 2000). Also, by fostering direct face to face interactions between the design team and local people by including participatory processes (Arnstein, 1969; Halprin, 1969; Hester, 1975; Linn, 1968).

The emphasis on participation emerged from a recognition that inequity was linked to democratic deficits in aggregative, municipal scale voting practices. It was proposed that these deficits could be mitigated by the participation of local people in decisions that affected their neighbourhoods (Chambers, 2017; Cheyne, 2015; Dryzek, 1990). These practices were grounded in a critique of municipal and professional 'top down' practices, including a fundamental scepticism about their ability to respond to social injustices (Arnstein, 1975; Chambers, 2017; Hester, 2006).

Many (but not all) of the key players in the design disciplines were professional spatial designers and so their response was to build participation into their professional norms - namely applied design practice, often advocating for design thinking as a different approach to local empowerment (Halprin, 1969; Hester, 1975; Hirsh, 2012). However, some secondary attention was given to the "autocratic nature of design itself" (Herrington, 2013, p. 493). Their aim was that via their example other designers would no longer view public participation as threatening to their creativity, and so move on from suburban projects for "gentleman's club" clients who had "corporate not democratic interests" (Hester, 2006, p. 136).

2.2.1 Urban Spatial Design: an overview of site-based design practice

Design professionals often define themselves by what they believe to be a distinctive form of practice using 'design thinking' (Rowe 1986) to tackle 'open, complex problems', (Dorst, 2011) or 'wicked problems' (Rittel & Webber, 1973). These types of problems lie at the intersection of heterogeneous factors which design transforms using creative processes to generate aspirational value for others – clients, local people, etc. (Dorst, 2011; Roozenburg, 1995). The spatial designers' role is to guide the design process for particular areas where these complex problems are acute, using a number of conceptual frameworks (Hirsh, 2012; McHarg, 1969; Sanders, 2013). Broadly, these frameworks guide the designer through problem definition and

the process of developing value by synthesising "a 'frame' - the general implication that by applying a certain working principle we will create a specific value" (Dorst, 2011, p. 524). To create a frame, the design team draws on what they understand of a place and synthesises it with elements from wider thinking, from ecology and local significance, to infrastructure (Bélanger, 2009; McHarg, 1969; Treib, 1995), or in the case of participatory design; justice and democracy (Griffin et al., 2020; Hester, 2006; Manning & Sanoff, 1979; Sanoff, 2006; Till, 2005). Working within these frameworks, a professional designer will then gather and synthesise information from different sources and transform that into an outcome that is valued by the client.

Within Landscape Architecture, design thinking is integrated into the wider procedural thinking of the profession, most distinctly that which connects to its material landscape and spatial context. Swaffield (2002, pp. 227-228) summarises how much Landscape Architecture scholarship focuses on four discrete phases: "1. a phase of observation and collation of both site specific and contextual knowledge; 2. a phase of analytical and interpretative thinking; 3. a phase of creative exploration of possibilities for the future; and 4. a phase of deliberation and determination of action."

Central to the designer's application of these phases, is the definition of a 'site'. Meyer (2021) examines the centrality of 'site' in the history of Landscape Architecture practice, noting that "site concerns permeate the design process" (p. 38). She explains that by using practices for site-reading and site-design the Landscape Architect attends to particular physical characteristics and experiences in an area, and then edits the site, by designs that "through amplification, subtraction, distillation, or compression" (ibid, p. 44) changes the experience of the site, and its character. Whilst there hasn't been significant critical attention to site concerns until recent years (Kahn and Burns 2021), it is notable that site is often dealt with differently to place – as a procedural element in the design process. In contrast, place is focused on spatial meaning and experience. Therefore, in practice, 'site' is often created relative to the designer's abstraction of it. One result is that "the order and intention behind the seemingly contingent and fragmentary forms" (Meyer, 2021, p. 57) of actual constructed places has been neglected. Therefore, in current professional practice site is primarily a designers' tool.

This dissonance is somewhat unexpected as, since the 1970s, there has been a consistent concern in spatial disciplines with how people relate to and develop their spaces and places. This body of literature examines social, temporal and spatial dynamics – and how they coalesce into spatial justices or injustices (Appleyard 1981, Buttimer, 1976; Cresswell, 1996, & 2002; Gehl 2013; Jacobs 1992; Janowski & Ingold, 2012; Lefebvre, 1976, 1991; Olwig, 2019; Relph, 1976; Soja, 1996, 2010; Tuan, 1974). This includes a growing body of thinking that focuses on an issue highly pertinent to spatial justice – excluded or marginalised axiologies and epistemes of place – including indigenous and feminist perspectives (Bellacasa, M. (2017); Dombroski, K. (2016); Joks, S., et al. (2017, 2019, 2020); Yates, A. (2021). The lineage of the scholarship can be traced to scholars, such as Relph, who shifted thinking from homogenous definitions of a space to heterogeneous understanding, assimilating many lived experiences – placing Landscape Architects as uniquely able to order and focus human intentions, experiences and actions spatially. Whilst Relph's research considered a particular era of designs, his work focused Landscape Architecture and Urban Design on an implicit risk with design practices; "the casual eradication of distinctive places and the making of standardised landscapes that results from an insensitivity to the significance of place" (Relph, 1976, p. 613). This signals that participation is not the only arena within Landscape Architecture and Urban Design that is concerned with the local relationship to places. This is important to note, as the implication is that the wider design process is significant to studies of democracy and just places.

Recent literature continues to address this concern, with Beauregard describing how:

> All sites first exist as places. Before places become objects of Urban Design and design, they exist in personal experience, hearsay, and collective memories. Standing between planners and designers and the sites on which they hope to act are socially embedded narratives. And while these place narratives can be ignored, they cannot be wholly erased. (2021, p. 226)

Other scholars grapple with the practical and political implications of this challenge. Kahn and Burns (2021, p. 3) state that "a site too often is taken as a straightforward entity contained by boundaries that delimit it from the surroundings…such an approach to the site in design misses much…it occludes the fact that a site is defined by those holding the power to do so."

Their proposition is that designers must critically address the problematic intersection between local place and site by using site practices that consider site in terms of three constituent areas. The first is the 'area of alleged control', which qualifies and describes the traditional notion of site as the place where the design team act. The second is the 'area of assumed influence', noting the likely "forces that act upon a plot without being confined to it". The last is the 'area of projected effect' – a spatial description of the expected influence of the design (Burns & Kahn, 2021, pp. xiii & 5).

Schön (1992) notes an underlying problem that raises a question about Kahn and Burns' approach – that design practice alone is not sufficient to settle the dilemma of how to apply conceptual frameworks to a specific place, noting the tension between 'rigour versus relevance'. This raises the question of how to create outcomes valued by the client and users, rather than a technically correct application of concepts or 'technical rationality' (Schön, 1983). Schön's thinking draws on Dewey's idea of a 'reflective conversation with the situation' as the episteme of practice (Dewey, 1910; Schön, 1992). In the case of spatial design, Schön (1992, p. 29) develops this into the idea of "design as a conversation with the materials of the situation" (which includes local people) to support the designer to undertake 'reflection in action' – in the form of iterations of action and reflection during which the designer adapts and develops how they value for a place. However, Schön's ideas are also limiting. Lamm and Wagner (2020) examine how these conversations don't always stimulate professional reflection and can be experienced by designers as unwelcome 'restrictions from the stakeholders.' The implication is that 'site practices' are a way of extracting an area from a place where the primary relationship is with the designers, whether by deliberate intent or as a consequence, is likely down to the opaque ethical position of a particular design team.

These various disciplinary practices, whilst differently interpreted and critiqued, are foundational within empirical studies of spatial design practice (Biddulph, 2012; Calderon, 2019) and institutionalised in professional practice in, for example the guidance provided by professional design institutes on the normative, standardised stages of the design process (NZIA n.d.). This frequently normative, staged (and so processional) approach to design practice, is inherently problematic when dealing with the emergent complexity of the 'wicked problem' of a particular place.

A more fundamental concern emerging from the critique of established site design practices is their ontological opaqueness and so a lack of clear definition of what, and so whose underlying values it is responding to, a concern considered in the literature on the application of design thinking (Biddulph 2021, Turnbull & Hoppe, 2019). This is a weakness of Schön's work as it positions the designer as apolitical (Smyth, 1989), with inadequate focus on professional reflection before action (Greenwood, 1993). Biddulph therefore argues for the recognition of the politics, and so moral ethics of design;

> Designers also have the role of creating artificial objects and in urban design terms, spaces, and places, which involve synthesis and interpretation of everything (or in reality something) that has gone before. They are confronted by decisions that may be infinitely complex if all possible factors were embraced. Choices need to be made, and so urban design is political to the extent that we must try and understand how our decisions might favour some (people, other species, or environments) over others. (2012, p. 2)

This raises the question of the tacit interactions between the values and ontology underlying professional practices and the humans and non-humans in the settings they work in. In the literature that develops the concept of 'Landscape Democracy' (Arler, 2008; Egoz et al., 2018; Larsen & Johnson, 2017; Olwig, 2016) and that exploring pluriverse, place-based approaches to planning and design practice (Glackin & Dionisio 2016; Larsen & Johnson, 2017; de Jesus Dionisio et al 2021), it is clear that design practices (and more broadly planning and other policies and practices that change places) are seeking to deliberately amplify and activate, through participation, the heterogeneous social forces that shape inequality and injustice. This in turn, raises moral stakes for designers leading participatory design processes. They are making a professional commitment to effectively respond to heterogeneous forces with practices that develop justice. The next section considers some key limitations of their practices.

To summarise, design practice intends to transform heterogeneous factors into a valued solution. This includes material, spatial and social factors. In participatory design there is a particular focus on transforming the diverse factors that contribute to social injustice. However, established design practices have an implicit focus on empowering the values and

ontologies of the professional designer, which limits the values and ontologies of local people's relationship to place. This dissonance, between the intent of design practice and participatory practices, raises a moral question about how current professional practice can respond to local injustice.

2.2.2 Reconciling professional design with public participation

Proposals to develop the existing professional design process to better address the needs of those who experience urban injustices or inequities have been largely focused on two imperatives: inclusion, supporting the professional designer to include particular local people; and deliberation, to enable consensus between local people, and with designers. Theorisation has focused on how professionals can integrate existing democratic thinking with design practice and its wider place-based spatial and material concerns: focusing on how power is managed, what types of control are devolved by professionals to which participants, at what point, for what reasons (Arler, 2008; Arnstein, 1969; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Hester, 2006; Hester, 2012; Hirsh, 2012; Linn, 1968; Till, 2005).

This has led to two key concerns: first, how to deliberate towards consensus (Healey, 1997; Parnell et al., 2002; Richardson & Connelly, 2005; Sanoff, 2014); and second, how to integrate these concerns with professional design decision-making (Forester, 1999; Hester, 2006; Hirsh, 2012; Pena et al., 2017; Till, 2005). Design is a vocational discipline and the applied literature has focused on procedure. This has resulted in the weight of the research being focused on the different roles of designers as engagers and facilitators of diverse and excluded perspectives (Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Forester, 1999; Healey, 1998; Horrigan & Bose, 2018; Parnell & Patsarika, 2011; Sanoff, 2006; Sutton & Kemp, 2002), arbitrators of social good (Blundell Jones et. Al, 2005; Hester, 2006; Hirsh, 2012; Till, 2005), and synthesisers of learning from participation processes, along with other information, into a valued proposition for a future space (Hester, 1975; Hirsh, 2012; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Till, 2005).

The literature includes a small number of studies that take primary consideration of the local perspective on Landscape Architecture and Urban Design and adjacent disciplines where the scholar is also a local participant in a planning process (Carr, 2012; Jones, 2007), or use

concepts grounded in a local perspective of the landscape/environment (Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Joks & Law, 2017; Laet & Mol, 2000; Larsen & Johnson, 2017; Williams, 2014). There is also one older paper written entirely in the words of, and with the consent of, local leaders (Arnstein, 1972). However, this scholarship is not central to the discipline, and nor does it deal with the challenge of co-empowering local people and professionals within complex contingent contexts of change and the need to also develop democracy – and justice.

Despite the considerable breadth of the procedural literature, there is a concern that the applied roots lack substantive theorisation (Calderon, 2013; Roe, 2007) and designers are not aware of what expertise is necessary to work with participatory processes. This includes a tendency to implement standardised and familiar procedures that fail to effectively engage with and democratise a particular context (Hoddinott et al., 2019; Pena et al., 2017; Till, 2005). Indeed, they can feel like "process is punishment" to both professionals and local people (Carr, 2012, p. 437) and lead to what can be argued is ontological dissonance and disruption between local people and professional processes rather than explicit responsiveness to heterogeneity.

A popular recent procedural handbook, *Design as Democracy*, goes so far as to call recent participatory design practice, "formalised and calcified" (Pena et al., 2017, p. 1), before setting out that;

> For participatory design to be truly democratic it cannot remain a standardised public process. This task requires more than just conventional design skills – it challenges designers to seek meaningful, ethical, and effective ways to design with communities. It needs to move beyond conventional processes that are formulaic, closed, abstract, superficial, and monofunctional. Participatory design must become contextual, open, experiential, substantive, and holistic. (ibid)

Nonetheless, the handbook is also a rich and interesting source of novel procedural thinking, including developing contemporary concerns such as designers' self-reflection on structural privilege (Agrawal & Shah, 2017). There are other vital avenues that recent scholarship is pursuing, both within Landscape Architecture and within the adjacent fields of landscape planning and participatory development, such as the qualities of professional expertise (Hoddinott et al., 2019; Kristensen & Primdahl, 2020), and the growing recognition that it takes

time to shift to constructive participatory practices (Kristensen & Primdahl, 2020; Stenton & Cowen, 1996). Kristensen and Primdahl (2020, p. 162) note that "one should not have unrealistic expectations about quick fixes", or indeed quick practices.

Hence there is growing awareness that design participatory procedures have been insufficient, and indeed lead, somewhat unpredictably, to harm as well as good (Van Wymeersch et al., 2019). In the parallel discipline of participatory development studies, this question has been responded to more substantively, noting that the focus on new procedures and improving procedural expertise has led to 'methodological individualism' by practitioners (Francis, 2001). Noting that this "obscures an analysis of what makes participation difficult" and instead of a focus on democracy, there is a normative "obsession with the local as opposed to wider structures of injustice and oppression" (Mohan & Hickey, 2004, p. 11). This perspective is shared by design scholar Slavin (2016), who notes that participatory design tends to centre the designers' imagination of the user of a system, rather than the user themselves – which disconnects the designers from the wider ecosystem.

This idea of recognising the possibilities of a place's participatory need is also echoed in wider scholarship on participation. The seminal work of Stenton and Cowen (1996) critically examines a key concern; what can be achieved via 'imminent' and 'immanent' participatory practices? These can be summed as imminent – the makeability of society through specific social interventions, and immanent – the historic processes of social change (Mohan & Hickey, 2004). This is a useful distinction, opening up the question of whether ongoing local relationship to place or a professional process is the primary process, and so has the potential to add nuance to existing scholarship within design disciplines. For instance, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design scholars have consistently raised concerns about who is central to participatory design, local relationship to place and related democratic concerns, or the effectiveness of expert design practice in the project's implementation (Arler, 2008; Carr, 2012; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Horrigan & Bose, 2018; Slavin, 2016) but have not expanded their field of view beyond the period of the design or planning process.

2.3 Critique of Participatory Design Practice

It is clear there is a gap between the aspirations of participatory design scholarship and its practice. As Hou (2014, p. 332) argues: "[while] most practitioners, theorists and the public generally support the moral and intrinsic value of participation, few are satisfied with the actual processes and outcomes". This concern is echoed by Till (2005, p. 24), "we should be surprised, therefore, that the term participation is so willingly, and uncritically, accepted as being for the common good".

Recognition that participation is not inherently good or progressive, leads to calls for a strengthening of the critique of participation design practice, and this section examines the implications of two normative, theoretical ideals of participatory practice: the empowerment of local people, and the development of consensus.

2.3.1 The empowerment of local people

Arnstein's seminal (1969) text *The Ladder of Participation*, was a landmark for design scholars and practitioners, marking a shift from considering *if* participation was worthwhile, to providing a framework for a critical examination of *how* participation was done. Underpinning her critique was a belief that participation works when it achieves "the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes to be deliberately included in the future … [in order to]…induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society" (ibid, p. 24).

At the heart of Arnstein's paper is a heuristic ladder that sets out steps to direct the participation of local people who experience significant inequities in urban development: citizen control – as "every other means of trying to end their victimisation has failed" to counter the limitations of the city's representative democracy in resolving urban problems (Arnstein, 1969, p. 33). It grades eight typologies of *how* local people can be empowered, starting with experiences that she considers to be 'nonparticipation', moving up through 'tokenism' and into 'citizen control'.

The ladder and its variants, are now the de facto professional standard for public participation, and the normative backbone of training in public sector participation, for example, the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2, 2014), as well as the root of a considerable body of scholarship in participatory design and Urban Design (Gaber, 2019; Laskey & Nicholls, 2019; Lyles & Swearingen White, 2019; Slotterback & Lauria, 2021).

However, Arnstein recognised the heuristic's limitations, noting that, "neither the have-nots nor the power holders are homogeneous blocks… [and so the ladder] does not include an analysis of the most significant roadblocks to achieving genuine levels of participation" (Arnstein, 1969, p. 25). The result is there is now a considerable body of scholarship that examines how specific roadblocks to participation can be removed. However, this literature is generally procedural, rather than theoretical, with local empowerment as normative (Boano & Kelling, 2014; Calderon, 2013). It is consistently sceptical of 'top down' municipal decision-making and considers better decision-making arises from control by local people (Hester, 2006). As such it assumes creating conflict is a necessity for social change, between emergent 'bottom up' local imperatives, and established 'top down' professional direction and other authorities (Richardson & Connelly, 2005). Yet, there are useful qualities in both the ease of delivering via local scale participation and the efficacy of interfacing with larger strategic (and budgetary) scales.

Alongside the limitations Arnstein identified, there is a more fundamental critique of approaches with a singular focus on local empowerment; it obscures the real-life challenges at the intersection of local, municipal, and professional processes and interests, and indeed shades professionals and expertise out of the scholarship (Carr, 2012; Clausen, 2017; Hou & Kinoshita, 2007; Hudson et al., 2011; Laskey & Nicholls, 2019; Tritter & McCallum, 2006; Van Wymeersch et al., 2019).

Tritter and McCallum (2006, p. 166) conclude that "Arnstein's emphasis on the transfer of power assumes that power has a common basis for users and providers (or policymakers). Such an approach limits the potential for sharing experience, knowledge and the harnessing of multiple perspectives inherent in successful user involvement."

This critique of grassroots, bottom-up processes is not unique to design disciplines, with Cooke and Kothari's (2001) participatory development studies book, *Participation: The New Tyranny*, raising concerns that participatory approaches were becoming mainstream without sufficient evidence of why, when and how they were empowering and transforming the lives of marginalised peoples. This includes concerns that attempts to work between professional and lay epistemes are hindered by a lack of attention to the dynamics within participation, for example, is being local to somewhere the same as having local knowledge and power (Hudson et al., 2011)?

In summary, Arnstein's 'Ladder of Participation' has become a normative ideal within participatory design practice. It was developed to empower local people to resolve intransient injustices, where representative or aggregative democratic mechanisms had failed, but has significant limitations in not recognising the diverse sources of power underscoring complex real-life processes or the complexity of place-based interactions. This in turn limits its ability to support heterogeneous collaborations – including between professionals and local people.

2.3.2 Reaching for rational consensus.

More recently, a new focus of scholarship has emerged to bring consensus into 'a method of decision-making' (Richardson & Connelly, 2005) and in particular, on deliberative procedures for consensus-building (Forester, 1999; Healey, 1997; Hester, 2006; Innes & Booher, 1999; Pena et al., 2017; Richardson & Connelly, 2005; Sanoff, 2006; Sidaway, 2013). Sidaway (1998) identified three distinct elements to a consensus process; namely that deliberative not aggregative methods like voting are used to reach mutual agreements – including all participants able to veto a decision; all those with a stake and who are prepared to cooperate fairly are included and that the deliberative process is underpinned with the principles of fairness, openness and trust. Calderon (2013) identifies a common theoretical foundation for consensus in Habermas' theory of communicative action,and in particular the creation of an 'ideal speech act' (Habermas, 1981). Habermas identifies justice as something to be deliberated, with De Angelis (2021, p. 5) noting that in "Habermas's conception the public is key to an emancipatory model of democracy based on people's self-rule and rational,

enlightened public discourse". For Habermas, "social inclusion remains as the primary goal of political participation" (ibid). Calderon (2013, p. 49) describes how for Landscape Architecture and Urban Design this means bringing "the unconstrained, unifying, consensus-bringing force of argumentative speech" into the design process, noting that "in this conception, participatory decision-making in Landscape Architecture becomes a process of interactive collective reasoning, carried out through deliberation" (ibid). This both identifies a common driver to Arnstein, seeing empowered local deliberation as key to defining justice, but also a common critique, as 'inclusion' relies on the idea of including people in a singular and finite source of power.

It is particularly relevant for this study (and to Landscape Architecture and Urban Design), to note that both Arnstein and Habermas are primarily concerned with human-to-human interactions and that the place exists only as an object for deliberation. In addition, it is reasonable to assume that where a consensus process is used within a professional design process, the constraints of the conversation will be aligned with professional concerns and practices (e.g., within site boundaries). This concern is considered by Boano and Kelling (2014), who describe consensus as a totalising and self-sufficient principle. They describe how reaching for stability via temporary moments of consensus homogenises and/or externalises diversity and dissonance, with the result that whilst "participation can address the manifestation of local 'wrongs', it hardly challenges the root causes" (ibid, p. 42). It may result in a good participation moment (defined as consensus) but in only limited transformation of externalised factors such as structural inequities – therefore limiting the development of democracy. This in turn raises questions about the desirability and efficacy of being included in institutions or professional processes which centre on the empowerment, and opaque ontology of another (Larsen & Johnson, 2017; Ngata, 2019; Macfarlane, A. & Macfarlane, S. (2019); Simon, 2016; Tuhiwai Smith, 2021). This leads to professional abstractions (such as 'site') that underpin 'rational' professional judgements, sidestepping the real-life complexities of practicing in a place, with heterogeneous overlapping ontologies, whereby examination of explicit ontologies is "a way of seeing the situated and interdependent particularities of our own worlds…in the places we share" (Larsen & Johnson, 2017, p. 186).

This line of critique, that defines the limitations of consensus thinking, identifies how it is in dissonance with Arnstein's and other urban scholars' concerns that inequities are driven by

who controls both the design process (Arnstein, 1969; Linn, 1968) and the urban places (Agyeman & Evans, 2003; Griffin et al., 2015; Madanipour, 2010). Therefore, there is a direct tension between the two predominant normative perspectives; one advocates for citizen control and the other centres on professional procedures. This unexamined tension is currently enacted as dissonance and disruption during projects.

In summary, deliberative consensus is proposed as the primary procedural approach to transforming dissonant perspectives between humans into mutual agreement. However, consensus has limitations which raise questions about its efficacy. Consensus processes act within pre-defined professional and institutional constraints, e.g., the notion of site – which can be used to disable or exclude local people from challenging structural injustice. This tension between the democratic and social justice intents of participation and those of professional design procedures results in dissonance and disruption of projects.

2.3.3 Reconciling Landscape Architecture with democratic theories

Alongside concerns with equity and justice, which have been core to the development of participatory design, there is another key interest for Landscape Architecture and urban scholars. This has been how to reconcile established and principal areas of theory in Landscape Architecture (e.g., environmental and ecological theory), with social theory that supports the widening and/or deepening of democratic decision-making (e.g., direct and deliberative democracy, theorisation of justice, civic self-determinism and social inequities). Interrelating theoretical traditions to develop wider social and environmental goods are not unique to the design and planning disciplines (Dryzek, 2013; Gundersen, 1995; Lafferty & Meadowcroft, 1996; Mason, 1999). For example, a nexus between ecology and democracy emerged in the 1970s (Pickering et al., 2020) and became a key influence on the development of participatory design. In his introduction to one such approach, 'ecological democracy', Hester (2006) describes how the ideals from ecology and democracy developed separately, in different areas of studies with divergent traditions (science and expert-led versus people-led democracy), before the attempt to blend them whilst maintaining integrity to both.

Within the applied disciplines of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, there has been a particular tendency to shift quickly to procedures for how to work with local people in a way that leads to better care and concern for the environment/ecology (Dempsey & Burton, 2012; Elands et al., 2018; Hester, 2006; Whiston Spirn, 2005). Empirical studies reveal two procedural tendencies that result from the blending of these dual origins. In the first, the professional designer is framed as being rational and normative, guiding the application of theoretical thinking via the design process, and then arbitrating or negotiating between the social needs and agency of people and ecological (or indeed other) needs of a site (Elands et al., 2018; Hester, 2006; Hirsh, 2012; Hoddinott et al., 2019). The second tilts towards local people as more vital, as the subject of design: focusing on a normative ideal of local people's empowerment and relationship to place, including their definitions of democratic process. The intent is to empower local people as the key reference point for spatial and material change (Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Hou & Kinoshita, 2007; Linn, 1968, 2008; Schuman, 2006). The latter leaves the design team's autonomy unclear. This drives a tension between professional practices and the democratic social political process that is keenly felt when theory is applied to practice. This is summed up by Carr (2012, p. 437) who suggests we "recognise the lasting appeal of both the public input and the expert-rational models, as well as the risks of allowing them to coexist and undermine each other"; he concludes, unhelpfully, that in practice they are 'mutually exclusive'.

These two practices will overlap in the same places, with the same people, as public participation becomes mainstream (Arler, 2008; Briggs, 2008; Silver et al., 2010; Van Wymeersch et al., 2019). This raises the question of how theorisation needs to shift to better support design professionals to work within the complex reality of participatory design in Urban Spatial Planning. There have been four lines of development, which are now briefly summarised to signal the direction that this study will take.

First, there have been several studies exploring the in-between space by conceptualising dissensus and conflict as a force for social transformation and democracy – much of it underpinned by two political theorists; Mouffe and Rancière (Boano & Kelling, 2014; Hillier, 2003; Huybrechts et al., 2017; Pløger, 2004; Keshavarz & Maze, 2013; Mouffe, 2016, 2020; Rancière, 2010; Traganou, 2020).

Second, there has been greater recognition of the relevance of a designer's own identity in relation to the people being designed for – through the work of, for example, black, female and indigenous design scholars who explicitly centre their own episteme in order to revise and develop design procedures, including using the university design studio as a medium to develop new practices (Agrawal & Shah, 2017; Davis, 2018; Griffin et al., 2014, 2015; Griffin & Weimer, 2020; Kiddle, 2018).

Third, there is a new body of scholarship examining the idea of 'Landscape Democracy' (Arler, 2008; Egoz et al., 2018). This literature reframes participation within the wider values and concerns of democracy so that it is "anchored in a particular social contract" in order to "promote and materialise landscape democracy as a step toward spatial justice" (Egoz, p. 64). In doing so it draws on the democratic political scholar, Dzur. Dzur (2008, p. 130) advocates for new forms of democratic professionalism that, "situates professionals squarely within the public culture of democracy' and asks them to see 'the public good with and not merely for the public".

Fourth, and largely influenced by planning theorist Bent Flyvbjerg (Flyvberg, 1998; Flyvbjerg, 2002), there is the increasing application of Actor Network Theory (Latour, 2005; Latour & Yaneva, 2017) to Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. There has been a deliberate shift into grounded empirical studies that focus on the interactions that happen during a design and planning project, aiming to develop our understanding of urban design and planning as a contingent and complex undertaking (Boelens, 2011; Calderon, 2019; Farias & Bender, 2010; Flyvberg, 1998; Metzger, 2011; Murphy, 2016; Tietjen & Jørgensen, 2016; Van Wymeersch et al., 2019). These studies portray the complex interrelationships between design professionals, local people and the non-human actors of place and interprets them using established theoretical concepts (e.g., wicked problems). Significantly, many of these studies indicate the value of conceptualising a shift in positionality of the designer, to one of greater political and democratic self-awareness. Slavin (2016) identifies that the generation of designers who are stepping into these complex human and non-human systems are "so much more humble than their predecessors….these are designers that do not understand themselves to be in the centre of the system. Rather, they understand themselves to be *participants,* shaping the systems that interact with other forces, ideas, events, and other designers" (ibid, p. 3).

In summary, recent scholarship has explored a number of lines of inquiry on how to reconcile the tension between the rational normative professional and the normative ideal of empowering local people; conceptualising dissonance as constructive, expanding the epistemes of design to include previously excluded identities, developing ideas of democratic professionalism and reconceptualising design and planning practice as contextualised in local contingency and complexity - and so revisiting the positionality of the designer as participant not a leader.

These directions signal a critical question: If design professionalism is dependent on and relative to conditional, conflictful and complex systems within a place-based democracy, (rather than including people in their discrete, normative professional process within the boundaries of a site), how can designers still maintain a rigorous focus on the democratic intent of participatory design and also avoid the unintentional harm to local people, their relationship to place, or to their clients? What theoretical tools are there to apply to professional practices to articulate democracy explicitly as they navigate the contingencies of spatial change? How could those tools enable professionals to define boundaries assertively? In the next section I turn to a term that has received little attention in the design disciplines, but which may help to constructively reframe the relationship between professional designers and local communities – the concept of consent.

2.4 Introducing an interdisciplinary lens of consent

Consent is a rich field in both democratic theory and professional ethics. Its Latin origins reveal its intent: *con* meaning, 'together' and *sentire* meaning, 'to feel' – a dual inference, considering *how* to work out problems together and *what* solutions bring people together. It is understood as the fundamental interaction of democracy – 'I consent for you to act on my behalf' (Ringen, 2009). From that base interaction, diverse approaches have arisen, from the aggregative (e.g., voting) to the deliberative (e.g., citizen's juries). Many professions, (e.g., medicine, research, law, and journalism), consider how they interact with individuals or communities to shape consent, to reduce the harm an asymmetry of power can cause, but still work within professional parameters of good practice. This conceptualisation of consent is known as

‘informed consent’ and provides a theoretical backbone for this study into professional-led participatory design. Informed consent is both developmental and composite, as it is underscored by specific moral duties being discharged, through processes, to define a permissible course of action that one does on behalf of another. Central to both settings is the expectation that consent should be freely given and well informed, and without its counterpart, coercion arises.

It is notable that as a layperson, informed consent is partially and slightly experienced when, for example, signing a permission form. The literature on informed consent reveals that this procedural interaction, signifying consent, is the tip of the iceberg under which professional practice has been critiqued and honed. There is a wealth of critical thinking on a wide range of complex and difficult interactions between professionals and lay people, such as different assumptions on the role of the professional and lay person as to what autonomy means in practice, professional rationality and how it develops and inhibits autonomy, deliberate non-participation, non-dissent and passivity (Berger, 2017; Cocanour, 2017; Corrigan, 2003; Farrell & Brazier, 2016; Frunză & Sandu, 2017; Husak, 2010; Kon, 2017; Specker Sullivan, 2017; Tauri, 2018). There is also a wealth of empirical studies that support the use of an informed consent methodology with specific phenomena, including cancer diagnosis in Japan (Specker Sullivan, 2017), and evidence-based psychotherapy practice (Blease et al., 2017). It is notable that studies of informed consent do not emphasise the creation of ‘good’ procedures, a limitation of the literature in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design (see section 2.2.2), so this approach differs substantively from existing approaches to evaluate participation (Innes and Booher 1999). Informed consent is instead used here to support an exploration in a complex and contingent context, with the aim to enable practitioners to think better in their contexts. This is a more sophisticated expectation of practitioners – but one more suited to the complexity of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. Chapter 3, Methodology examines how that is done – using informed consent in a heuristic, iterative and reflexive way.

Consent has been occasionally referred to in the literature on participatory design and planning where it is framed as an aspirational feeling or value, or as a desirable outcome from procedures (especially consensus procedures), but without specific definition (Forester, 1982, 1999; Sanoff, 2006; Sutton & Kemp, 2016). In contrast, the Aotearoa New Zealand literature on consent within design mainly refers to statutory consent, such as resource consent

(Environment Canterbury, 2000; Ministry for The Environment New Zealand, 2008; Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment New Zealand, 1998; Swaffield, 1999). The emphasis is upon permissions to undertake certain activities via legal control exercised by statutory public agencies, not on *feeling together* with the constellation of those involved in environmental decisions. In contrast, the development of democratic processes that interface with design disciplines (e.g., environmental and urban planning), do not explicitly consider consent. It focuses on using a procedural proxy for participatory thinking. This procedural approach sets out (mandatory or advisory) frameworks of procedures - for example the IAP2 Framework (IAP2, 2014), without interrogating their underlying assumptions and suitability (e.g., IAP2 is developed from Arnstein's 'Framework of Participation'). So, it is novel and more direct to the concerns of democracy to consider how shaping local people's consent is dealt with in relation to the professional practice of landscape and urban design.

2.4.1 Key Concepts from the literature on Informed Consent

Informed consent has been introduced, with varying degrees of efficacy and effectiveness, in a wide range of professional contexts. It is typically introduced where there is a known asymmetry of power and so risk of coercion (e.g., the state and its citizens, doctors and patients, researchers and research subjects, media and their public and lawyers and legal clients). It is also associated with managing inequities and injustices in interactions within society, such as between different genders and races (Faden & Beauchamp, 1986; Chomsky & Herman, 1988; Locke, 2000; Shea, 2012). Where there is a risk of coercion, thinking and practice for generating consent is used to reach more symmetry of power so that participants can *feel together* – or in the intent of this study to draw on the existing practices of heterogeneous actors: to practice together.

The following section will now describe critical concepts that nuance the functional idea of informed consent by considering what concepts underlie how it is shaped. As will be discussed in Chapter 3: Methodology, these concepts were used to support a sensitive interpretation of the empirical data.

Informed consent is primarily a relational transaction. To explicate the key relationships within this transaction, this study draws on Kleinig's 'grammar of consent', whereby: *who* consents to *whom*, to do *what* (Kleinig, 2010). This 'grammar' of a chain of subjects focusing on a shared object of a process includes two types of human actors: the one who consents (A) and the one (B) who initiates the *process of inquiry,* which leads to A giving permission for B to follow a particular *course of action* – or the object of consent (φ) (Kleinig, 2010). The person giving informed consent is not always the person being acted for, nor are they acting alone - consent is well theorised as being produced through *interactions* within a specific context (Faden & Beauchamp, 1986), such as familial relationships (Specker Sullivan, 2017).

Therefore, recognising the ontology of consent is key to this study, as "consent is not constituted primarily by a state of mind…consent requires signification" through defined communicative acts (Kleinig, 2010, p. 11). This ensures that the professional interactions involving informed consent avoid the critique raised of design thinking, its 'ontological opaqueness' (Greenwood, 1993). By extension, as informed consent is a novel concern for Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, it is important to consider actors who would be expected to shape consent, but whose signification is absent (Law, 2004a).

Informed consent is both a composite and development concept and so is formed through a particular alignment of its constituent concepts; primarily moral duties and the processes that discharge them. Thinking and practice in forming informed consent is rooted in three moral principles and has been the subject of philosophical debate since Aristotle and the emergence of ideas about individual autonomy (Faden & Beauchamp, 1986; Shea, 2012). Moral principles help us to develop a shared understanding of what is right and what is wrong, and so avoid coercion. This in turn helps us to identify our rights and our duties. When considering a particular situation, we find our greatest duty by finding the greatest balance of right over wrong. Faden and Beauchamp (1986) have described these moral duties in the order they would be discharged when forming consent:

1. *Autonomy* is associated with privacy, voluntariness, self-mastery, and choosing freely from our own moral position. It enables us to accept responsibility for our choices. We understand an autonomous individual to have intrinsic value, independent of circumstances e.g., age, race, position, or wealth. (N.B. More recent literature has

noted (further discussed in 2.4.2) the 'fallacy' of the Western ideal of the distinct and separate individual, and now considers autonomy as contextualised and contingent) – ie. It is often something formed with others, rather than in isolation.

2. *Beneficence* is the moral duty described by the Hippocratic Oath: 'Help or at least do no harm'.

3. *Justice* asks us to consider our relationship to others and consider if, on balance, consent is fair, due, and owed.

These moral duties are linked in a series - to discharge justice, it is necessary that someone's autonomy is empowered in a way that enables them to define or understand what beneficence is. This is illustrated below, for this study, in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 The development of consent via the discharge of moral duties

In discharging these moral principles several conditions must be met; the person giving their consent to another needs to be competent to consent, i.e. they have the cognitive ability; they have to give their consent voluntarily without *coercion* to act or not act; they need to be knowledgeable, so informed about the particular act they are consenting for; and form an intention for a particular act - the act is delivered as intended (Kleinig, 2010). It should be noted that whilst coercion is a contrary force to consent, it is a distinct and different concern that moral duties are discharged by the processes within the real-life *constraints* of the situation (Faden & Beauchamp, 1986; Shea, 2012). Equally, to act within professional constraints but without others consent is described as coercion (Corrigan, 2003). Significant attention is given, in the literature, to the impact and nature of coercion examining both its short and long-term effects on lay people's trust of professionals (Corrigan, 2003; Faden & Beauchamp 1986; Maclean 2009; Specker Sullivan 2019). This is also addressed in literature on journalism and public communications

Other scholars (Bossert & Strech, 2017; Farrell & Brazier, 2016; Miller & Wertheimer, 2010; Morreim, 2017; Perrault & Keating, 2017) have operationalised these conditions into what can be described as 'processes', through which moral principles are discharged (see Figure 2.2).

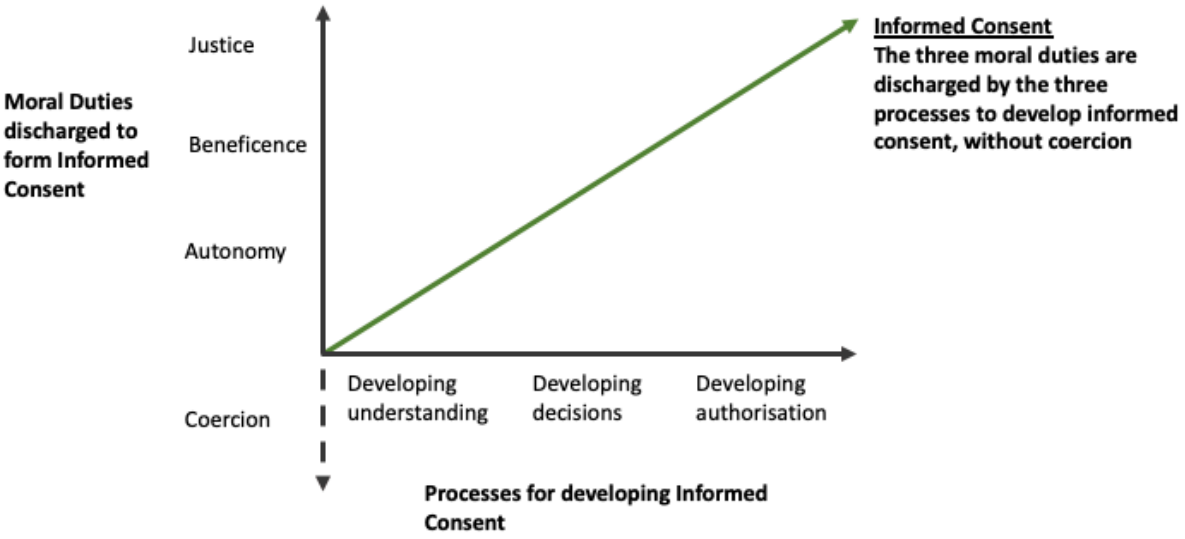


Figure 2.2: Initial Interpretative Model: showing how the developmental processes discharge moral duties to develop informed consent (Authors' own model – developed from this literature review and early empirical analysis).

Hence a competent person can voluntarily enter a relationship with professional designers, and they work to develop their *understanding*, which supports them to form a *decision*, which they then *authorise* by making an explicit commitment for a well-defined *signification* of a *course of action*. The application and further development of this interpretative model during this empirical study is explained and exemplified in Chapter 3, Methodology.

2.4.2 Qualifying concepts from the literature on Informed Consent

The study also draws on some qualifying terms and thinking to help nuance the basic concept of informed consent and respond to the concerns of this new disciplinary context:

Collective, on-going consent is considered by Corrigan (2003), noting that consent (and the avoidance of coercion) should be a critical "on-going process rather than a discrete act of choice that takes place in a given moment of time" (ibid, p. 20) with several studies identifying that autonomy is often contingent on on-going interactions between professionals, family, friends and the consentee. Corrigan's thinking (2003) is part of a wider shift away from the liberal and ideal notions of individual freedom and autonomy (Burton, 2002; Fox 1984; Fox & Swazey 1984; Reardon, 2001; Specker Sullivan, 2017) that originally underpinned thinking on informed consent – instead considering how the field of choice is shaped by "prevailing cultural norms, values and systems of expertise" (ibid, p. 22). This includes empirical research that examines how many cultures regard autonomy not as an individual pursuit but as a collective enterprise so, e.g.,, relatives engaging in decision-making can enable consent (Specker Sullivan, 2017). This is helpful to this study, moving away from similarly ideal and flawed notions of heterogeneous 'community', and towards understanding the consent shaping interactions that impact professional design.

Originating consent refers to the underlying norms in a society. These give to or take the legitimacy from different people's actions. If you act or represent the norms that have originating consent, then you increase your power. Originating norms are transmitted through a range of mechanisms, such as our culture, our prejudices, and our institutions (Faden &

Beauchamp, 1986; Shea, 2012). In the context of this study, originating consent draws attention to the empowerment of professionals and local people via pre-existing mechanisms in the place, and the cases will explore how people (and things) are being empowered to shape consent.

Authentic consent is consent that reflects an individual's values and is seen as having a greater benefit for our well-being. It is being given increasing focus as a condition for informed consent (Shea, 2012). Recent thinking is putting greater focus on informed consent as being the result of generating authentic consent between heterogeneous individuals (Faden & Beauchamp, 1986). This change aims to reduce the privilege created by assuming professional customs are the only relevant rational standard and therefore the only standard used to determine informed consent (Chomsky & Herman, 1988). This includes expectations of what moral duties look like, for instance, in different cultures or settings autonomy may mean to think and feel alone, independent from outside interference, or it may mean to be empowered to think and feel together (Specker Sullivan, 2017). This study will therefore explore whose values and beliefs underscore how consent is being shaped and how they are interpreting the moral duties.

Permissive consent refers to the condition that you are provided with a chance to consent to certain 'explicit and specific' things happening to you. This concept can inform the analysis to notice *what* was being consented for and *whose* consent has led to that (Miller & Wertheimer 2010).

Non-consensual practices are referred to aid the identification and interpretation of coercion. There is a significant body of research that explores non-consensual practices and their impact (Corrigan, 2003; Chomsky & Herman, 1988; Kon, 2017).

Passive consent, manufactured consent or dissent are considered as opposing forces to positive ways of generating consent. They arise where a participant's capacity or competence has been eroded or they have been coerced, for example, when providing participants with non-transparent information or placating them with partial perspectives (Coelho et al., 2011; Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Corrigan, 2003; Chomsky & Herman, 1988; Illich, 1977; Kon, 2017; Shea, 2012).

2.4.3 Existing connections between Informed Consent and the literature on Participatory Design.

Whilst informed consent is a departure from existing thinking on participatory design, they are both composite and developmental concepts. This section will address links between the constituent concepts of informed consent (as discussed in the previous section 2.4.1) and existing literature on participatory design. This will lead to an understanding that the moral goal guiding the developmental nature of informed consent can support design teams to navigate the emergent 'wickedness' of participatory design.

To recap (Section 2.4.1.2) there are three moral duties that develop informed consent. They are discharged in sequence: autonomy, beneficence (to do good or at least do no harm) and justice. These duties need to be discharged without coercion. This section will explore how existing literature on participatory design raised questions on how to interpret autonomy, beneficence, justice – and the amoral counter of consent: coercion.

Autonomy: Participatory Design theory has a strong focus on why and how to develop local empowerment for the purpose of reducing inequities and offers useful insights into how the similar concepts of *autonomy* and *empowerment* are enabled and limited. The scholarship is diverse and traversed the procedural (Arnstein, 1969; De La Pena et al., 2017; Hirsch, 2014a; Manning & Sanoff, 1979; Parnell et al., 2002) and those that made broader points – such as addressing the co-existence of different philosophical paradigms of autonomy – as what empowers me, might not empower you (Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Hou & Kinoshita, 2007; Makhzoumi et al., 2011). They have potential to inform the analysis of the empirical investigation of how and to what extent, these ideas could be applied to the non-human – including spaces and objects.

Beneficence: On *beneficence*, the analysis took cognisance of the rationales in the literature on Participatory Design (as discussed earlier in this Chapter), as to why professionals or local people are better placed to define what is good for a place (Hester, 2012; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Till, 2005). Then, taking account of *authentic consent*, this study used this literature on participatory design to provide precedents and so tune into what and whose ideas of good

were present in the empirical study. The existing literature also provided some useful examples of the types of influence of local values and beliefs, in particular their understanding and relationship to place (Arler, 2008; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Hou, 2014; Linn, 2008) and the design team's values and beliefs (Calderon, 2019; Clausen, 2017; Horrigan & Bose, 2018; Silver et al., 2010; Van Wymeersch et al., 2019). This acted as reflexive grist to the interpretative mill.

Justice: In contrast, the subject of *justice* has received substantive attention in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. Scholarship has been widespread and addresses why, how and what is designed. This study drew on two schools of thought. First and primarily, Landscape Democracy – including empirical studies (mainly European) of how the intersection between expert and local values coalesce into the implicit, project and place-specific definitions of spatial justice (Arler & Mellqvist, 2015; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Egoz et al., 2018). This includes, how relationships and roles during design implicitly define "whose landscape is it" (Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018, pp. 44–45). Second, careful attention to the work of U.S. urban justice scholars (Agyeman & Evans, 2003; Fainstein, 2010; Griffin et al., 2015, 2020; Griffin & Weimer, 2020), who have advocated for reframing participation within higher concerns, in particular, "Just City" scholars such as Griffin who ask, "would we design better places if we put values of equality, inclusion, or equity first?" (Griffin et al., 2020). This study drew from their attention to how participatory practices achieve this, by identifying values and signifiers of *just* participation which transect how to design and what is designed (e.g., mobility, identity). It was also considered how (and if) the participatory outcomes sustain in what is designed.

Coercion: The literature on justice, described above, tended to draw on empirical studies that consider existing injustice and asymmetries of power which can inform the interpretation of coercion. This includes being alert to Law's (2004) concern with different types of absences that is expanded on later in this Chapter (2.4.4). In the context of justice, this thinking draws attention to who is empowered, as absences contribute to or confirm wider and structural "patterns of ignorance…. the state of being ignored, or a situation one may find themselves in where their physical presence or humanity is not recognised or accounted for" (Abrams, 2020, pp. 5-6).

Lastly, the Participatory Design literature, including the procedural literature, considers what detracts from participation achieving just or democratic outcomes. This literature was used to

raise awareness of what coercive participatory practices and design practices may look like. This indicated how participatory design may do harm and/or sustain or develop injustices. For instance, Richardson and Connelly (2005, p. 87) identify how professionals leading participatory design create "the risk of manufactured consensus" and so it becomes " a tool of oppression", whilst Arnstein (Arnstein, 1969, 1972), and then others, explored manipulation, and other negative experiences, as a negative form of participation – including passivity, non-participation, insurgency, NIMBYs ('not in my backyard') (Clausen, 2017; Hirsch, 2014b; Hirsh, 2012; Liu, 1999; Pena et al., 2017; Silver et al., 2010; Van Wymeersch et al., 2019). The study drew on insights from empirical cases of participatory processes in Participatory Development studies and Environmental studies. Participatory Development studies provided rigorous thought on the dynamics of *justice* and *coercion* in the relationship between professionals and local people (Chambers, 2017; Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Cornwall, 2008; Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006; Mohan & Hickey, 2004; Stenton & Cowen, 1996). Environmental studies provided empirical examples of how the intersection of professional and local practices in relation to natural processes and elements can result in *coercion* (Deloria, 1992; Joks et al., 2020; Joks & Law, 2017; Larsen & Johnson, 2017; Law, 2004a; Østmo & Law, 2018).

This section will now consider how existing literature in participatory design can inform the interpretation of the processes of informed consent. To recap, (as per section 2.4.1.2), to discharge the three moral duties there are three processes that are understood to shape the informed consent (or lack thereof): understanding, decision-making and authorisation. This section addresses existing literature on participatory design which informed the interpretation of these processes.

There is a considerable focus in the procedural literature aimed at design teams, on how designers can support local people to form and communicate their *understanding* of a site (Halprin, 1969; Hester, 2006; Pena et al., 2017; Sanoff, 2014). In parallel, there is attention given to how designers can use this understanding to inform their *decision-making* process – including the use of consensus and synthesis – as explored earlier in this Chapter (see for example: Hoddinott et al., 2019; Till, 2005). This literature provided ideas (and ways of critiquing these ideas) about *roles* and what they were expected to achieve, such as framing the understanding or leading the development of decisions. These were tested and explored during the interpretation of the empirical studies. Finally, a review of the *authorisation*

literature made clear a tension in existing thinking, that maybe influencing practice – between for example, Arnstein (1969) advocating for "citizen control" and so authorisation of designs by local people, and of the role of the municipal client as authoriser, as defined by the staged design process (Carr, 2012). This raised a question for the empirical study – about how these authorisation processes interact to shape consent.

In summary, the application of the interpretative model of informed consent, to an empirical investigation, will take cognisance of a wide range of existing thinking about participatory design and from participatory development studies and environmental studies. This literature will support the study to interpret the composite concepts of informed consent.

2.4.4 Considering non-humans: a key limitation of the literature on informed consent

Informed consent is defined in terms of human-to-human relationships. Other disciplines that address informed consent arguably also engage with 'things' in aspects of their broader scholarship. For example, the body in medicine (Mol, 2002) and the newspaper in journalism (Chomsky & Herman, 1988). But it is crucial to recognise that with regards to the Landscape and Urban Design disciplines the non-human is a primary actor. So, a central concern of the investigation is the multiple interrelationships between humans, space and materials. This is therefore the most substantive challenge in translating informed consent to participatory design within Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. It raises a question with methodological implications, of how to theorise and operationalise informed consent in situations which involve relationships between humans, between humans and non-humans *and* between non-humans i.e. the translation of informed consent into this discipline requires the study to go beyond simply using design based research methods that account for non-humans (Gehl 2013). The final theoretical source I draw upon to apply the lens of informed consent to two participatory design case studies is Actor-Network Theory (ANT).

ANT is part of the 'material turn' in social science, which aimed to provide a basis for examining the agency of non-human actors on the 'social'. ANT provides this study with a theoretical base on which to consider a 'flat' ontology (Latour, 2005), giving equal ontological and epistemological status to objects, spaces, humans and technologies. Therefore, alongside the

interactions between humans (e.g., design teams and local people), attention is paid to human and non-human interactions with landscape elements (e.g., pathways) and to design practices and graphic representations (e.g., design drawings), used by designers to articulate their intentions. The different spaces of practice (e.g., on the landscape, and in the studio) and the tools of other human actors (e.g.,, municipal policies) are also relevant.

To understand how to do this, a range of theoretical and empirical studies in spatial disciplines were examined. The first was to consider John Law's (2004) more theoretical work on the how the 'presence' of things, human and non-human, in relationships needs to be critically challenged and the influence of associated 'absent' things be identified. He examines "(a) whatever is in-here or *present;* (b) whatever is absent but is also *manifest in its absence;* (c) whatever is absent but is *Other* because, while it is necessary to presence, it is not or cannot be made manifest". This provides a critical approach to considering the different ways autonomy is empowered / disempowered and so underpins the shaping of consent / coercion – contributing to what Griffith called ignor-ance – and so the formation of justice.

Also considered was what Beauregard (2013; 2015) called the 'places of practice'. This challenged the tendency to consider professional practices as normative by noticing that "planning's ability to be democratic depends as much on the array of places across which it is distributed as it does on the range of 'voices' that are allowed to be heard" (Beauregard, 2013, p. 9) and by association, who they don't hear and so become manifestly absent and 'othered'. This thinking was further developed by other scholars (Boelens, 2011; Boonstra, 2015; Farias & Bender, 2010; Palmås & von Busch, 2015; Tietjen & Jørgensen, 2016), who took an ANT approach to the study of empirical interactions between professional and local people in particular places and so shifted: "by opening up the spectrum of many others, navigating between these emerging others, and being able to empathise with the behaviours and strategies of these many others" (Boonstra, 2015 p. 57). The thinking was also informed by returning to Law's (2002) theoretical work on the inter-relationship of interactions between different spaces and objects – which will be further considered in Chapter 3, Methodology. Larsen and Johnson's (2017) thinking on the situated, heterogeneous yet interdependent and overlapping, ontologies of place provided a way of further recognising the intersection of place-based versus process-focused approach to design process.

Finally, cognisance was taken of papers that aimed to understand the change in the built and natural environment by considering changes to non-human actors. For example, changes to hedges and the emergence of desire lines (Murphy, 2016, 2017), and the lifecycle interactions of manmade objects such as water pumps (Laet & Mol, 2000). Law's (2002) work on the inter-relationship of interactions between different spaces and objects and the application of ANT theory as an analytical tool will be explained further in Chapter 3, Methodology.

2.5 Summary

This Chapter has set out a rationale for re-theorising participatory design. It examined the purpose of participatory design, such as for developing justice and democracy and noted the widespread adoption of public participation practices and support for its democratic ideals. However, it also identified considerable challenges with the practice of participatory design. The subsequent critique elucidates why the key thinking underpinning these participatory ideals has limited its practice and leads to a proposition to develop new thinking to support the relationship of design professionals and local people.

In response to that challenge, the Chapter has argued for the application of interdisciplinary concepts of consent to participatory design – particularly informed consent. Informed Consent is a developmental and composite concept across a range of disciplines to govern asymmetries of power between professionals and laypeople – and guide improvement in practice.

Finally, a key challenge has been identified: how to adapt Informed Consent to the disciplines of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, which are primarily focused on changes to spatial and physical change. Therefore, there is a need to augment the human focused concepts drawn from Informed Consent with an approach to dealing with non-human actors. To achieve this, Actor-Network Theory is introduced as part of the Theoretical (and Methodological – to be examined in the next Chapter) approach to this study. Cognisance is taken of ANT's application to landscape and environmental studies which focus on the interactions between professionals, local people, and place.

Overall it is clear that informed consent has the potential to respond constructively to the challenges described with existing thinking on Participatory Design. As a result, this study is guided by two research questions:

1. In what ways and to what extent does participatory design enable and impair the shaping of local informed consent?

2. In what ways, and to what extent is informed consent a helpful concept in understanding participatory design practices?

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods, will next examine how these questions were investigated, by drawing on concepts and methods from both Constructivist Grounded Theory (to support a deeply grounded approach) and the aforementioned Actor Network Theory.

Chapter 3 Methodology

The theoretical Chapter identified limitations in how we think about participatory design that impacts adversely its practice. It laid out the need for empirically grounded research that investigates the interactions during participatory design, to construct new thinking at the intersection of design professionals and local people. This type of investigation is well suited to interpretative research (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The study draws on two case studies of participatory urban design to undertake analysis. The interpretation is supported by concepts drawn from the interdisciplinary literature on Informed Consent (see Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework). The analysis of the empirical study supports their translation to this novel discipline and guides the interpretation, to generate substantive findings which are primarily presented as seven narrative episodes (Chapters 4 and 5: Findings). Each episode explores the interactions that shaped informed consent during participatory design (Case Study 1) and with a participatory designed landscape (Case Study 2). The key elements of each episode are placed within *The Framework of Informed Consent*. This framework is a novel approach to examining how informed consent is shaped during participatory design. Key findings from each case are described. Comparison of the case studies leads to three main insights about Participatory Design (Chapter 6: Discussion). This Chapter will now describe the Methodology and Methods used to develop these outcomes.

3.1 Research Paradigm

To set solid foundations for methodological congruence a clear research paradigm, or "basic set of beliefs that guide actions" (Guba, 1990, p. 17; Blaikie, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 2008, p. 113), was established. This paradigm is expressed in the study's ontology (what we assume exists), epistemology (how we know about what exists), axiology (what a study values or finds worthwhile) (Blaikie, 2010, p. 3; Lakoff & Johnson, 2008). This section will explain the research paradigm adopted.

This interpretative study intends to produce a subjective account of a knowable and independent phenomenon, participatory design. The researcher constructed the account and considered there were multiple realities present (section 2.1 notes that participatory design seeks to work with the differing perspectives of professional designers and various local people), so adopted a *subtle realism* ontology (Blaikie, 2010; Hammersley, 1991). To take account of the importance of both materials and spaces within Landscape Architecture and Urban Design (see section 2.4.4) – and so participatory design, this realist approach was developed into a 'flat ontology'. This means equal ontological significance is given to the interactions with and between humans and non-humans (Latour, 2005). Examples of non-humans are landscape elements and design drawings.

The study's epistemology is constructivist, recognising that the interpretations were developed "through the interaction of the investigator (and their society) with a reality or realities that may well exist independently, but that cannot be known independently of the presumptions of the investigators" (Swaffield & Deming, 2011, pp. 8–9).

The interpretative stance and the moral nature of a lens of informed consent and democratic concerns of participatory design, required a high degree of self-awareness and reflexivity, especially when synthesising case-based interpretations informed by the values of heterogeneous participants, human and non-human, and the researcher. Lakoff and Johnson's thinking on axiological awareness provided support, recognising that what is valued can be "socially and politically dangerous" as "… the people who get to impose their metaphors on a culture get to define what we consider to be true" (2008, p. 113). Cognisance was also taken of Kidd et al's (2017) work on how 'epistemic injustice' is a driver of inequalities in practice and projects, and Chambers' (2017) work on professionals' "strategic ignorance…deliberately not knowing or knowing but not wishing to be known to know" (p. 28). No other Landscape Architecture studies were located which considered axiology, or indeed epistemic injustice or strategic ignorance. As previously noted, there is a disciplinary tendency, in both Landscape Architecture and Urban Design research and practice, to implicitly assume the designers' axiology. So, inspiration was taken from empirical studies in adjacent disciplines, where human and non-human interactions were interpreted in order to articulate professional, state and local ways of valuing human and non-human actors (e.g., Chambers, 2017; Joks & Law, 2017; Laet & Mol, 2000). This supports the study to think critically at the intersection of professionals

and local people, countering the tendency of studies to take one or other of these perspectives as the research position (see Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework, including sections 2.2.1 & 2.3). In addition, the critical concepts introduced in this section (axiology, epistemic injustice and strategic ignorance) steers the interpretation towards the study's research questions – as both seek to address questions of how to identify the processes that enable or limit justice.

3.2 Research Design

This section will examine the rationale behind the four main elements of this study's design, explaining its **qualitative approach** to interpreting **two empirically grounded case studies**, using an **interdisciplinary lens of informed consent**. Finally, it will address the outcome from this methodological approach: **a series of seven episodes**, created to both make sense of the data and to communicate the data – in Chapters 4 and 5: Findings.

3.2.1 A Qualitative Approach

There were three reasons for taking a qualitative approach. First, the study considers participatory design not as an isolated professional practice, but as interactions within a wider social and cultural context. Qualitative research is well suited to exploring a contextualised phenomenon like participatory design, bringing attention to overlooked dynamics that contribute to the development of grounded findings (Law, 2004; Repko, 2012).

Second, a qualitative approach is useful when a study, as this does, aims to access first-hand perspectives of messy social phenomena (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2003; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Law, 2004), supporting the researcher to articulate and examine key interactions (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; Clarke et al., 2016; Law, 2004) in order to provoke a novel interpretation (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke et al., 2016; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Law, 2004).

Third, as explained, particular attention is paid to the study's reflexive axiology. Qualitative methodologies heighten awareness of values and support the cultivation of a curious and critical approach to diverse participants, uncovering original facets and generating novel

understandings, underscored by a self-reflexive approach to deal with bias (Chambers, 2017; Charmaz, 2008, 2020; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Law, 2004).

3.2.2 Two Case Studies

The empirical investigation is framed as two case studies. Case studies are well suited to investigations of landscape design processes as "the focus of the discipline is typically complex, multidimensional and embedded in a wider context, and thus hard to separate into discrete factors" (Deming & Swaffield, 2011, p. 11). Therefore, each Case Study comprises a purposeful sampling of a phenomenon (Thomas, 2010), enabling the investigation to take a deep dive into multi-faceted complex interactions (Charmaz, 2020; Swaffield & Deming, 2011; Yin, 2014) that include actors that are humans, non-humans – physical elements and objects (both man-made and natural), technologies and practices and spaces.

This study used the two cases to explore the potential of the novel lens of informed consent in the context of participatory design. The aim of using two cases, that were both similar and different, to enhance the interpretations: opening up subsequent discussions and implications, was through comparison and contrast. Both cases were situations where participatory design is explicitly introduced to develop local social and spatial justice – and also democratise the local relationship with the process and the designed outcomes (see section 2.1). In contrast, each case was in a different social and professional context and the study was undertaken concurrent with a different stage of the design process. Case Study 1 – Aro Valley, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand - was a case of standardised participatory design practice, reflecting the early stages of mainstreaming participatory processes. In this case, the design team used the same standard approach for every participatory design project. Case Study 2 – Grønne Park, Superkilen, Copenhagen, Denmark - was a case of exemplary participatory design practice having received numerous international and national design awards. Therefore, this case reflects the critiques and ideals that design teams, and their clients, explore when experienced with participatory processes. In both case studies, the municipality and design teams introduced participatory design because they expected this process to lead to designs that developed more significant equity between local people and their place (examined in the Origin Stories of each Case Study). Table 3.1 below lays out the similarities and differences in the cases

Table 3.1: Comparison of Case Study Criteria

	Case Study 1 Aro Valley	Case Study 2 Grønne Park
Similarities		
Place	An urban landscape, designed both professionally and locally, in residential area adjacent to the city centre.	An award winning professionally designed urban landscape in a residential area close to the city centre.
Background	Following past conflicts there was an explicit desire by the municipality and local people to improve their relationship, whilst also improving how the landscape contributed to local social equity. The project was overseen by a co-governance group comprising local people and municipal officers. Local values and principles were set in a pre-design participatory process. This was part of a wider shift to mainstreaming local participation at this municipality.	An explicit desire from municipality to shift the equity and so relationships between different local people (ethnic Danes* and a housing area with a high percentage of migrants and their descendants), and then a design team motivation to go beyond the established participation offered through ordinary municipal processes and reach for higher ideals. The municipality had an established relationship with the neighbourhood board and had identified this design project during a local participatory priority setting exercise.
Capabilities	Participatory design stipulated by the municipality (the client) and design team appointed because of experience of participatory design.	Participatory design expected by the municipality (the client). Design team appointed based on the potential of their landscape concept to transform local social welfare.
Differences		
Focus of study	During Design: A live participatory design process – from concept to preliminary design (at which point it unexpectedly stalled).	6yrs after the landscape is open, and local relationship re-established: how participatorily designed landscape had been physically changed since opening and how (designed) changes have influenced people's interactions with and/or perceptions of the landscape
Research position	Known investigator (Lofland, 2006) where inside knowledge and relationships supported the process of collecting data.	Outside investigator, with supervision and support from wider UCPH researchers.

(*ethnic Danes is a Danish term for Danes of Danish descent)

The main limitation of case studies is their particularity and care needs to be taken over the wider applicability of any theory developed. However, "while case studies cannot provide a systematic verification of accepted propositions" they are invaluable in testing propositions towards the "development of an explanatory theoretical idea" (Castells, 1983, p. 341 in Swaffield, 1991), in pursuit of "exemplary knowledge" (Thomas, 2010, p. 576) – as this study seeks to do with informed consent. Case studies from different times and places can be described as "dynamic cases" (Swaffield & Deming, 2011, p. 82). In this study, the cases were in different socio-political contexts and focused on different phases within the participatory design process and interactions with its resultant landscape, to advance the exploratory theoretical conversation. This provided an excellent basis on which to explore if and how a novel, interdisciplinary lens of consent could extend our understanding of participatory design, by providing an opportunity to define and refine emergent theoretical concepts, via a critical dialogue within and across the case studies (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Swaffield & Deming, 2011).

The study of the cases drew on two methodological traditions. Grounded Theory (GT) was helpful to guide the formation of insights grounded in the empirical study of the cases, that can relate to and inform participatory design practice (Charmaz, 2020; Corbin & Strauss, 2014) whilst attending to the everyday realities of social justice (Charmaz, 2008, 2020). Actor-Network Theory (ANT) provides a methodological basis for examining the agency of non-human actors' influence on 'the social' (Latour, 1990, 2005; Latour & Yaneva, 2017; Law, 2004), with awareness of a growing body of work within urban and environmental studies that unpack the relationship between the often divided domains of professional, material and local actors (e.g., Beauregard, 2015; Innes & Booher, 1999; Boonstra, 2015; Farias & Bender, 2010; Joks & Law, 2017; Law & Joks, 2019; Law & Mol, 2002; Tietjen & Jørgensen, 2016) and the agency interactions between humans and landscape elements (Joks et al., 2020; Joks & Law, 2017; Laet & Mol, 2000; Murphy, 2016, 2017).

Both methodologies can be understood as within the constructivist tradition and support the interpretative approach. Cognisance was taken of Latour's (2003) critique of the habits of constructivism: its tendency to focus on human actors and assume a singular human force defining a theory of action. These tendencies obscure the agencies of non-human actors.

Grounded Theory focuses on how people create social realities through social and relational practices (Charmaz, 2008, 2014; Clarke, 2003). It has its origins in the work of Glaser and Strauss (1966), who argued for the need to evolve theories by doing social research, rather than deducing theories from prior assumptions (Glaser, 1967). Grounded Theory builds on earlier methodological theories, most significantly symbolic interactionism (Andrews, 2012; Burr, 2015; Clarke, 2003) whose antecedents include Mead (1934) and Blumer (1969). Fundamentally, Mead and Blumer argued for interdependency between self and society, for instance, how the meanings ascribed to things are produced through social interactions (Blumer, 1969). Therefore, the roots of Grounded Theory clearly support this study to examine the meaning of social interactions within participatory design.

Key Grounded Theorist, Charmaz was influenced by Social Constructivism and so pulled Grounded Theory towards post-modernism, and its focus on complexity, fragmentation, and localities (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2003; Kelle, 2007). Whilst earlier Grounded Theory was considered an inductive methodology (Glaser, 1967; Mills & Birks, 2014), Charmaz (2014) argued that abductive logic is integral to grounded analysis, as it mixes "rational and imaginative aspects of research" to reap the rewards of both "a logical form of inferencing" and "the role played by insight" (p. 16). This 'continuous process of conjecturing about the world' replaced the researchers' instincts, including those from prior practice, with more substantive 'cultured knowledge' (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). This supported the researcher's explicit participation in the construction of theory (Charmaz, 2014; Mills et al., 2017).

Despite its congruence with much of this study's intent, Grounded Theory does not support ontological emphasis on interactions with and between non-human interactions – an unacceptable limitation. This led to the introduction of ANT and its sharpened focus on a flattened ontology. This was done by 'following the actors' rather than determining them at an early stage in the research (Latour, 2003, 2005; Latour & Yaneva, 2017). Therefore, this study first assembled the influential interactions (human and non-human) and then, drawing on Grounded Theory, constructed an interpretation.

The *flat ontology* understands 'space' as both object and space, moving the study away from pure cartesian concepts of space. Murdoch describes how Actor Network Theory "sees space

as constructed within networks…gathering diverse places and times within common frames of reference and calculation" (Murdoch, 1998, p. 360). In this regard, Case Study interactions were followed through different spaces (e.g., a design studio where drawings were made, a workshop in a community hall, a desire line from a social housing area into an urban landscape); and times (e.g., past activism to plant specific trees which are now growing on the landscape, a local idea about what to plant on a slope fuelled by visits to Danish islands and industrial pollution of the soil inhibiting current use).

In order to define the boundaries of these spatial objects (and so follow them and assemble the influential interactions for analysis), Law (2002, p. 91), defines how "objects are stable arrays or networks of relationships". When an unstable object fragments into parts then each part becomes an object in its own right (Law, 2002). For example, a tree is an object, until it is affected by hot weather and heavy rain. Then the tree is better understood as multiple objects: exposed roots, a dead trunk, fallen leaves. These separate objects are distinct actors that were followed, identifying how they interact with others; for example, the trunk of a tree interacts with a municipal gardener, lawnmower, municipal maintenance office and a concerned citizen; whilst its roots interact with a design studio (seeking to relocate the tree), a digger, and then its new neighbour - an adjacent slope down which heavy rain flows.

Incidents of instability are described in ANT as a 'controversy'. A controversy begins within interactions "where actors disagree…[and] discover that they cannot ignore each other, and controversies end when actors manage to work out a solid compromise to live together" (Venturini, 2010, p. 261). By identifying controversies, this study was able to enter the socio-material world of participatory design in the two case studies to follow the actors and assemble the influential interactions that were shaping consent. This included identifying how the actors who were influential defined absence and othering of other actors (Law, 2004). For instance, the absence of the residents of Mjølnerparken from the interactions which changed the designed landscape.

In sum, this duo of methodologies supported the detailed articulation and interpretation of influential interactions from the 'social mess' of two cases of participatory design – essential to maintain the study's axiological stance, and so address the research questions with integrity and rigour (see section 3.1).

3.2.3 A Novel, Interdisciplinary Lens of Informed Consent

This study is interdisciplinary because it applies a conceptual lens to participatory design that is drawn from other non-design disciplines. A conceptual hegemony has obscured limitations with how we think about participatory design. Within design disciplines the focus has been on 'participation' and its underlying normative ideals, over other conceptualisations of how to do democracy (see Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework). Hegemony is normal within all disciplines, each has its own implicit and explicit traditions, which are underscored by particular paradigms, principles, practices and agendas (Swaffield & Deming, 2011) – such as those found in participatory design research and practice – which is considered from either the position of the design team, or local people (see Section 2.3.3). However, (as examined throughout Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework), whilst these can be purposeful, they can also obscure and limit what can be known. Deming and Swaffield (2011) note Landscape Architecture's frequent and successful borrowing from other disciplines. This study follows in this tradition, drawing from other disciplines that focus on developing welfare and equity for relevant insights on consent. Thus, the interdisciplinary approach supports the "process of answering a question ... [by drawing] on disciplinary perspectives and integrates their insights to produce a more comprehensive understanding" (Repko, 2012, p. 12).

For reasons introduced in Section 2.4, the concept of consent is used here in a heuristic, iterative and reflexive way, so adapting it to be coherent with the empirical data – and so exemplify application to the wider discipline of Landscape Architecture. To achieve this the study considered the interdisciplinary concepts as 'sensitising concepts' which provide "initial ideas to pursue and sensitise you to ask particular kinds of questions about your topic" as you engage with and continue sampling, empirical data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 16). When introduced to this study the concepts of informed consent were loosely defined without concrete indicators to support the abductive research logic (Charmaz, 2020). Unlike deductive research, these concepts were tentative and dispensed with if not defined, as the researcher moved back and forward between the data and the concepts to develop the interpretation (Charmaz, 2006, 2020). This approach homed in on both the most influential interactions in shaping informed consent and useful 'sensitising concepts' (Bowen, 2006; Charmaz, 2006, 2020), as described in the Theoretical Chapter 2.

One of the hardest elements of the interpretative process was moving away from existing interpretations of participatory design which are locked in the discipline (see Chapter 2), and so hard to diffuse with a new, potentially dissonant interpretation (Chambers, 2017). This was done by being sensitive to the 'grammar' of consent, to interpret the different roles played by humans and non-humans in the shaping of informed consent. It required rigorous critical attention to both the researchers' and the subjects' biases (see section 3.1). To support this the study adopted a 'flip-flopping' approach originally described by Corbin and Strauss (2014), where "the researcher examines a concept from a different perspective in order to highlight significant properties" (Hoare et al., 2012) in order to develop existing and identify new analytical directions. This enabled the study to shift between the different grammatical elements, to consider interactions from the perspective of different realities that influence the participatory design process. In addition, the choice of analytic methods, in particular story-lining, described later in this Chapter, ensured that the interpretations had integrity to both the empirical data, and the conceptual and exploratory intent of the study.

3.2.4 Seven Episodes from Two Case Studies

The outcome of this research design is seven interpretations across the two case studies. These seven interpretations are named 'episodes' in the thesis, to communicate that they were thick and relevant but not complete accounts of all the interactions during and from participatory design. The process of making these interpretations started by identifying and then following controversies to articulate influential interactions. These were interpreted using the sensitising concepts, explained in Chapter 2, to unpack how consent was being shaped. Writing these episodes was both a process of making sense of and synthesising the data into an interpretation, and a way to communicate the findings. The final seven episodes are the main part of Chapter 4: Findings Aro Valley (three episodes), and Chapter 5, Findings Grønne Park (four episodes). This makes the research both transparent and fit for purpose as the narrative approach is accessible to both academic and applied readers and clearly describes the influence of multiple actors, human and non-human on participatory design (see section 3.1). Each episode, and later each case is summarised on: *The Framework of Informed Consent* diagram (developed during the study from the interpretative model introduced in Chapter 2).

This supported the comparison between episodes and between cases – and the exemplification of the utility of the framework and so fulfilled the study's aims to explore the usefulness of informed consent, in Landscape Architecture in Urban Design.

Each episode is centred on a controversy emerging from interactions with a particular object of the design process - a non-human landscape element (e.g., a bunker or a white wall). This enables the study to address a concern expressed in Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, about the opacity of and dissonance within participatory design practice which informed consent could potentially resolve: with revealing who was designing what and why in practice – and to counter the methodological tendency of participatory design to give primacy to human interactions.

Finally, the seven episodes are constructed so that they can be discussed (Chapters 4 and 5: Findings and Chapter 6: Discussion) within three nested scales of implications: they create a thick description of the interactions shaping consent with that non-human actor; collectively they illuminate the wider Case Study of participatory design; and the two cases together exemplify an approach to thinking about participatory design and to develop more broadly useful explanatory ideas about participatory design.

3.3 Research Process

3.3.1 Research Process

The research started from the initial research questions which determined a manageable and meaningful scope. The study undertook multiple iterations of data analysis (memo-ing, diagramming and story-lining), and theoretical sampling by going 'to and through' between the empirical data (key informant interviews, participant interviews and observation and documentary research) and the sensitising concepts drawn from the literature on informed consent. Understanding and deployment of the sensitising concepts was, as discussed in Chapter 2, informed by how the constituent concepts within informed consent were dealt with in the existing literature on informed consent. This led to theoretical sufficiency and the result

is a new conceptual framework on informed consent, and the substantive findings from two case studies in the form of seven storylines – called episodes.

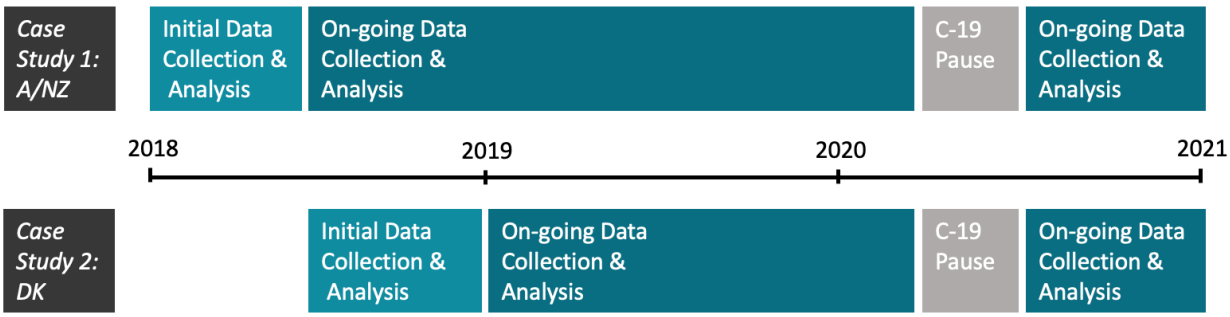
Diverse explanations of the data were explored during this research process, leading to emergent concepts, questions and ideas (Charmaz, 2006, 2014; Clarke, 2003; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Morse, 2010). A key procedure was *constant comparison,* a "data-analytic process whereby each interpretation and finding is compared with existing findings as it emerges from the data analysis" (Lewis-Beck et al., 2017 p. 180) to ensure the quality of the interpretation (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Belgrave, 2018; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Mills & Birks, 2014) including consideration of the study's axiological concerns (see Section 3.1). This was started using coding, before turning to three main analytical methods: memo-writing, diagramming, and story-lining. This led to the pursuit of new 'analytic directions' (Charmaz, 2006) which guided the next iteration of theoretical sampling – from existing data or additional data which was gathered. Over time, iterations sharpened, amalgamated, or even discarded emerging concepts. The result was emergent findings and theoretical framings that were increasingly grounded "within its social, historical and situational contexts" (Charmaz, 2020 p. 18).

The outcome was that this study systematically abstracted from the data until 'theoretical sufficiency' was reached (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2014) and so a conceptual framework was developed to support a novel way of thinking about participatory design. Theoretical sufficiency is used here with cognisance of the critique of its antecedent, theoretical saturation (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Dey, 2007). Saturation is the term used when there are "no new categories or themes emerging" from the data and the theory developed is "dense and logical" and validated through subsequent data collection (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, pp. 139–140). However, the notion of saturation can be misleading with its undercurrents of positivism, especially in a study like this exploring a novel but nascent approach to a phenomenon. It is therefore expected and accepted that practice insights will emerge after the research is completed, and the interpretation is subjective so different scholars would develop different concepts (Charmaz, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Glaser, 1967). Dey (1999) proposes the term theoretical sufficiency as more suitable, to denote that the phenomenon is understood in sufficient depth to support the development of theory that is well integrated with the data – and in this study stimulates a new theoretical direction for participatory design, rather than defining a new school of thought.

3.3.2 Timeline of Study

Table 3.2 shows the timeline of the Case Study research. Initial data collection for Case Study 1 was done in advance of Case Study 2. This was due to the physical distance between the case studies, in the different countries (Aotearoa New Zealand and Denmark). So, in practice Case Study 1 led the data collection and analysis, but thereafter can be seen to "proceed simultaneously and each informs and streamlines the other". This iterative process made "analysis successively more theoretical" (Charmaz & Bryant, 2014, p. 1). The research timeline was disrupted by the global Covid-19 pandemic, leading to a pause in the study.

Table 3.2: Timeline of empirical study



3.4 Research Methods

This section will describe the two main sets of methods, those for empirical data collection (participant observation and interviews, key informant interviews and documentary research) and data analysis (coding, memo-writing, diagramming, and story-lining). Finally, outstanding ethical considerations are addressed.

3.4.1 Data Collection

The objective of empirical (and indeed all) data collection was to collate detailed, full, diverse and relevant types of data from which theoretical samples could be taken to test and hone understanding of the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2006; Law, 2004b; Yin, 2014). Each Case Study focused on a different phase of participatory design and so data collection methods were specific to the actors influential on that phase. The research questions guided initial data

collection and analysis. The approach was to 'follow the actors' (Latour, 2005; Latour & Yaneva, 2017). This ensured rigor in the identification of influential actors, both human and non-human, within the participatory design process.

The table below (Table 3.3) details the purpose, source and methods used for data collection: semi structured interviews, documentary research and participant interviews and observation. The following sections will explain why those methods were used and how they were used.

Table 3.3: Summary of Case Study Methods

Case Study 1: Aro Valley Purpose: To gain an understanding of the interactions that influenced the participatory design process	
Data Source	Data Collection Method
Participatory Workshops and Meetings (11) Co-governance meetings (6)	Participant Observation Participant Interviews (52) Field-notes – written, sketches and photographic Audio recordings of co-governance meetings Some workshops were filmed by the organisers (used as reference alongside data listed above)
Key Informants (12)	In-depth semi-structured interviews. Follow up conversations after observing workshops and meetings.
Wellington City Council (WCC) archive	Documentary Research Letters between local people and WCC, community newsletters, minutes from hearings and community meetings, media and policy documents.
Project documentation	Documentary Research Reports and documentation relating to the design process (including designs and technical reports), Minutes of co-governance meetings, and related email correspondence. Minutes from Community Meetings and related local correspondence.

Case Study 2: Grønne Park Purpose: To gain an understanding of the interactions that were influencing the everyday life of the landscape	
People interacting with the landscape	Participant Observation (15 full days over 10 months, plus cycling/walking through on a weekly basis) Participant Interviews (33) Fieldnotes – written, sketches and photographic
Key Informants (14)	In-depth semi-structured interviews. Follow up conversations where clarification required after subsequent participant observation.
Municipal and State Documents	Documentary Research Minutes, newsletters, recordings of participatory events, design drawings, images of models, state, and municipal documents.
Publications, media, and academic articles on Case Study landscape.	Documentary Research Recent academic research on the landscape, media reports, images of landscape development and post-opening, archival images of the landscape prior to its design.

3.4.1.1 Participant Observation & Interviews

The rationale for participant observation and interviews was to ground the study in what was going on, or in the words of qualitative methods scholar, Lofland (2006, p. 18): "sustain a many-sided and relatively long-term relationship with a human association in its natural setting for the purpose of developing a scientific understanding of that association". Albeit this study considered non-human and human associations.

Both studies started with three approaches to observation: passive (e.g., sitting), mobile (e.g., walking/cycling through) and interpersonal encounters – where observations were followed up by a conversation with people observed (i.e., a participant interview). These were recorded in written fieldnotes, or brief audio recordings. Quoted participants are included in Figure 3.5: Summary of Key Informant and Participant Interviewees – and identified by the event or place observed (e.g., a workshop), an intersection.

In Case Study 1, this focused on observing the interactions contributing to the participatory design process (e.g., meetings and participatory workshops). In Case Study 2, it was focused on contemporary interactions with the designed landscape (e.g., observing people use the landscape and recording physical and spatial changes over time). Participant observation and unstructured interviews were sustained throughout the field studies. Participant interviews played a particularly important role, as these were more suitable for gathering data from immigrant residents of the adjacent housing area, Mjølnerparken (this is expanded on in section 3.4.1.2).

In Case Study 1, the investigator had an existing relationship with the team, having advised on the early stages of the project. As a 'known investigator' I was able to follow Lofland's (2006) thinking and easily "identify the cast of characters" and make "their intentions known, gaining cooperation from the setting participants" (p. 37). The observations were supplemented with on-going, regular conversations with participants in events and with key informants, to further explore the meaning they were making of what was happening and how that influenced their subsequent interactions. Notes were kept in a field diary and where possible meetings were recorded for future reference.

Case Study 2 was selected to explore a case of expert participatory design and consider its influence over interactions with the resultant landscape. The investigator had no prior relationship to the landscape, although gained initial intelligence via colleagues and supervisors at UCPH. The initial focus of the study was interactions with the designed landscape. So, the study started with an intense period of observing the landscape: every day for two weeks, at various times of day. Then observations continued less frequently but for longer periods (e.g., whole days). This was supplemented by additional visits at times when use may be different (e.g., evenings, holidays, and weekends). In total, the observations continued for 10mths, from mid-summer through to late spring. Written and visual observations were recorded in fieldnotes, including quotes, sketches, questions arising and visual records of interactions on the landscape and traces of possible past interactions (to be subsequently investigated) in the form of 855 photographs. Making and reviewing the observations led to emergent ideas of what was going on, which were then tested through participant interviews. Interviewees were approached as informants on particular places (Case 2, Grønne Park) they were participating in (e.g., at the intersection of pathways). The interviews were led with simple prompts such as, "tell me what is happening here" or, "what are you doing here", "where are you going today" and also in specific places on the landscape: "do you know what has happened here" or "do you know why this place is like this" to explore the interactions that led to, for example, a mark, a piece of debris, or a landscape feature not in the initial designs. These thirty-three short interviews were recorded during and after in fieldnotes, and where permission was given and time and weather allowed, they were audio recorded. Interviewees were also asked whereabouts they lived – using prompts which then led to a more specific conversation: "do you work nearby", "do you live in Mjølnerparken/ Heimdalsgade/Nørrebro? And "why are you here today?".

3.4.1.2 Semi-Structured Interviews with Key Informants

Key informants were understood as, "important guides to insider understandings" (Lofland, 2006, p. 61). Semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher "to maintain some consistency over the concepts that are covered in the interview" (Corbin & Strauss, 2014, p. 39), whilst being responsive to the information shared – and so focus on addressing the

research questions and exploring the sensitising concepts with a primary focus on the empirical. The key informants were identified throughout the course of the fieldwork by *following the actors*.

Across the two case studies a total of 26 key informant interviews were conducted (see Table 3.4). Key Informant interviews had similar questions – focusing on *following* the interactions that developed the processes of consent: understanding, decision-making, authorisation, without coercion. At first (Case 1, Aro Valley) the interviews addressed these as explicit questions, for example, how did you develop the understanding that informed the designs? But it quickly became apparent that a richer and more detailed account was collected by allowing the interviewee to tell their story of their relationship to the phenomenon, with prompts to focus in and follow up on questions to elaborate and clarify.

In Case Study 1, which focused on the process of design, the 12 key informants included local people (6), professional design team members (4) and municipal officers (2). The local people were elected representatives (past and present) of the local community council and so had oversight of the understanding and decision-making in the area. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed (12). There were additional interviews and follow ups with key informants, in the form of participant interviews. Interviews started with a request to describe the participatory process so far, before elaborating on details.

In Case Study 2, the 14 key informants included key landscape changemakers (4), professional design and construction team members (5), municipal staff (2) and staff from local social agencies (3). Key landscape changemakers were understood as those responsible for making changes to the designed landscape. Several of these key landscape changemakers took months to identify, via previous interviewees, their contacts and desk research. For instance, a municipal gardener knew that a man was introducing new garden beds, but not who he was and if and what municipal support he had. He was eventually identified and contacted, by raising this query with other municipal key informants. One key landscape changemaker was only tracked down after the investigator left Denmark, and then connecting with him via social media. He was interviewed online.

All interviews were audio recorded, where the interviewee consented (13). These informants were identified through participant observation and interviews and subsequent documentary research. With most landscape changemakers (3) the interviews took place on the landscape and they provided a tour to the changes they knew about. This provided a direct understanding of what they were doing here, although at times the audio quality was impacted by weather and so required additional follow up questions, and time transcribing. Fieldnotes were also done during and after interviews, including notes, audio recordings of brief conversations, sketches of interactions with the place, and photos to record features they referred to, and reflect and so raise analytically questions and ideas.

There were also key landscape users who were observed but did not take part in extended key informant interviews – as the sole researcher was not resourced or supported to approach and interview (e.g., heavily intoxicated individuals or people whose English was limited and needed translators – this was a limitation to this study). In particular residents of Mjølnerparken – a housing area adjacent to the landscape and whom the design was aimed at – often had Danish as their second language, learnt as adults – and so had less English. Through trial and error, it was found the best approach was participant observations and interviews on the landscape about something that was happening at that moment, rather than extended key informant interviews in a separate setting. Several the Mjølnerparken community leaders and workers were approached. Some were pre-occupied with advocacy against recent housing policy changes. A worker from the housing association was interviewed – acting as a key informant on policy context and its impact (see above). In addition, greater attention was given to observing their interactions with the landscape, documentary sources and prior research, for example: (Stender & Bech-Danielsen, 2019) – including meeting the lead researcher to discuss their findings and suitable methods and informants.

Below is a summary table of quoted key informant or participant interviews (Table 3.4). The key informant interviews reference an individual. The participant interviews are groups of interviews from a particular event in Case 1, Aro Valley. In Case 2, Grønne Park participant observations and interviews are considered fieldnotes.

Table 3.4 Summary of quoted Key Informant and Participant Observation and Interviewees.

Case Study 1 Aro Valley		Case Study 2 Grønne Park	
Code	Role	Code	Role
1Loc1	Local activist	2DesMj1	Design team (Mjølnerparken)
1Loc2	Local leader (co-governance group)	2Loc1	Social Housing Staff (Mjølnerparken)
1Loc3	Local leader (co-governance group)	2Mun1	Municipal Officer
1Loc4	Local leader	2DesMj2	Design team (Mjølnerparken)
1Mun1	Municipal Officer (co-governance group)	2Loc2	Nørrebro Local
1Des1	Design Team	2Mun2/3	Nørrebrohallen / Local Board Staff (2 informants)
1Des2	Design Team (key informant and participant observation – preliminary design workshop)	2DesMj3	Design Team – construction (Mjølnerparken)
1Des3	Design Team	2DesGP1	Design Team (Grønne Park)
1Des4	Design Team	2Mun4	Municipal Officer
1Loc5	Local Leader	2Mun5	Municipal Gardening / Maintenance Team
1Loc6	Local Leader (participant interview/letter)	2Loc3	Rewilder
Pre-design priority setting workshop	Participant observation of local people	2DesGP2	Design Team (Grønne Park)

Concept Design Workshop	Participant observation of local people and design team	2Loc3	ZUSA – Whitewall artist
Preliminary Design Workshop	Participant observation of local people and design team	2DesMj3	Design Team (Mjølnerparken)
Monthly Co-governance meetings	Participant observation of co-governance	Fieldnotes (DATE)	Participant interviews and observations of Grønne Park

(All are Key informants unless otherwise identified)

3.4.1.2 Documentary Research

Documentary Research was used to "corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (Yin, 2014, p. 107), for instance where key informants recalled when and who made prior changes to the landscape. If documents raised a question, then supplementary data collection and analysis was done until a clear understanding was gained – through documentary research or other methods.

In Case Study 1, the documents studied included design drawings, presentations, policies and reports, communication between project team members, meeting minutes, and relevant municipal policies. Whilst all this information could have been accessed by the public, the investigator was able to access it more easily – as they were known to the team involved and included in project correspondence. Documentary research was also undertaken at the city's archive – to clarify past social and spatial concerns that have continued to have influence. This included archives of correspondence between local people and municipal officers and elected representatives, community newsletters and details of legal and regulatory processes.

In Case Study 2, the documents required were similar: design drawings, presentations and reports, municipal and state-level policies and plans and meeting minutes. These were all publicly accessible. Where documents were in Danish, an auto-translate app was used. Key parts of the translations were checked and discussed with Danish-speaking colleagues at UCPH.

The documentary research focused on detailed investigation of past images of the landscape, to understand exactly what processes had happened, and when, to form the current landscape. A concern was raised by conflicting accounts during informant interviews about what the Participatory Design process had indeed changed or not changed. These images included aerial views from state photographic archives (The Royal Library, n.d.). This was supplemented by more recent images – those taken by users since the landscape opened. This included media (journalist-led and social), social media images, and when the landscape was used as a backdrop (e.g., in hip hop videos). This focus on landscape detail was helpful in interpreting interactions and the processes of shaping consent.

3.4.1.3 The role of fieldnotes across data collection

Underscoring all data collection was the making of fieldnotes. Lofland (2006) describes fieldnotes as, “the crucial data log out of which analysis will emerge” (p. 89). As such, the fieldnotes for this study included both records of data, and reflections – the start of analytical engagement with the data. The process of compiling fieldnotes, using multiple media, enabled a thick, navigable record.

For example, Figure 3.1 shows excerpts from fieldnotes related to a physical intersection examined in Chapter 5, Findings: Case 2, Grønne Park, Episode 4 The Intersection. The fieldnotes start with participant observation and interviews with an elderly resident. This led to observation of an intersection – recorded in fieldnotes over the period of the field study. Observations were recorded in sketches, photographs of interactions and as notes describing observations. These were done at the time or immediately afterwards. During one observation session, contractors were observed and then interviewed as they appeared to be doing further work on the intersection. Data from these, led to key informant interviews exploring the decisions that led to changes, including with the main contractor, landscape architects and engineers responsible for the design and construction of the changes – and with municipal officers and the initial design team of this landscape. In addition, documentary photographs of when the desire line at the intersection first appeared, and how it developed were sourced – to check informants’ knowledge.

Figure 3.1: Some of the images, sketches and notes made during participant observation and interviews about the desire line (from Case Study 2).

3.4.2 Data Analysis

The first step of analysis included both initial coding of the key informant interviews (Case 1, Aro Valley) and images from participant observation of the landscape (Case 2, Grønne Park), to begin the process of identifying influential controversies and so start to articulate and follow interactions shaping consent, and *memo-writing* to record and interrogate the thinking behind the code (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Belgrave, 2018; Charmaz & Bryant, 2014). Key during this phase was focusing on the interdisciplinary concepts of consent, to inform the subsequent analysis.

As the analysis became more theoretical the methods shifted towards developing the details and nuance of the interpretation and so *diagramming* and *storylining* were added to the analytical methods (Charmaz, 2006; Mills & Birks, 2014; Ramalho, 2019; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). All these methods encouraged a primary focus on the empirical data and supported by the aforementioned 'to and through of analysis' between the sensitising concepts and the empirical data. This section will now describe each method of analysis, why it was used, and to what effect.

3.4.2.1 Coding

Coding was used as an iterative process that involved the "interrogation of data in a manner akin to hypothesis testing" (Dey, 2007, p. 182). It was used mainly in the initial stages of the study, to get to know the interactions that were influential in the participatory design process and start to consider how these may relate to consent. These were subsequently tested via further data collection as well as through further analysis of existing data and the analysis continued using other methods. Initial grounded coding was undertaken to get to know and explore types of influential empirical interactions. Data was coded line by line and then these codes were transcribed onto post-it notes to be organised to create data categories (see Figure 3.2).

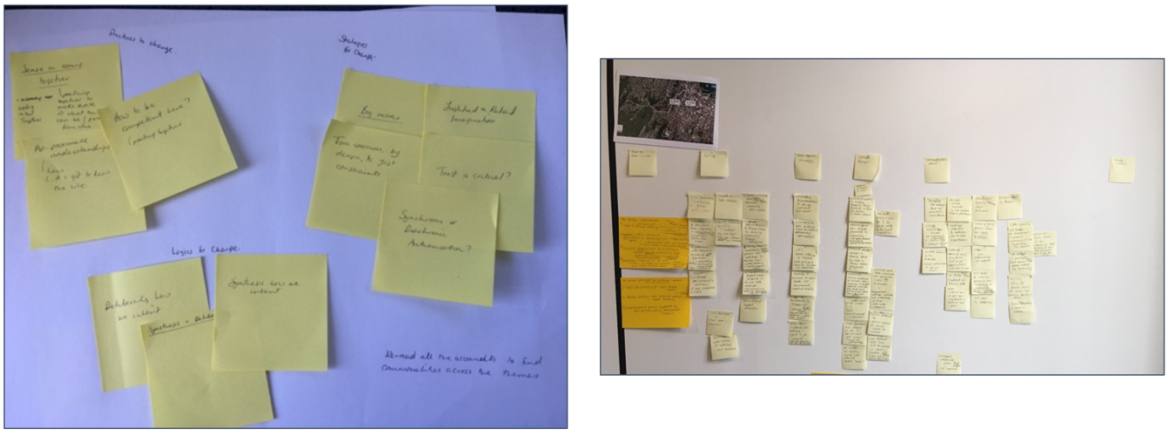


Figure 3.2 The process of grouping codes generated via key informant interviews into categories.

This process opened up the data – producing queries to test with the wider data and additional data then gathered and challenges to existing assumptions and bias – before the later stages of analysis which made use of the sensitising concepts. This process was key as the investigator had extensive applied experience, prior to the research. However, the coding was most suitable for discrete interactions of aural and written data – so limited in its use with non-human actors and to trace the evolution of informed consent over time. This led to the introduction, and subsequent primary use of other methods.

3.4.2.2 Memo writing

Memo writing is a "the distillation process, through which the research transforms data into theory" (Lempert, 2014, p. 245). It focuses on conceptualisation and was, as scholars advised, done continuously throughout the research process (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Lempert, 2014). The purpose of memo-writing changed during the study, as Lampert (2014) described, its initial use "explores, explicates and theorizes emergent patterns" leading to further abstraction of analytical ideas (pp. 245–248). Reflecting this, initial memos were lengthy, downloading dissonant ideas about what was going on in the data and challenging prior assumptions from practice. Then, considering how the interactions related to the sensitising concepts and indeed which sensitising concepts were most useful. Later, the memos were briefer and used in tandem with other methods to home in on key interactions, nuance understanding of a

particular concept within consent, and explore the relationships between concepts in a grounded setting.

Memo writing was also used to articulate the researchers' assumptions and so support reflexivity – through self-reflection and discussions with peers and supervisors. This included writing and reviewing memos from different actors' perspectives, to highlight assumptions and bias. These could then be pivoted into questions that were tested through ongoing theoretical sampling.

3.4.2.3 Diagramming

Diagramming was used for two purposes. First, diagrams were used to reduce the data to focus on key influential interactions developed to create conceptual visualisations of the data, evolving explicit interpretations that were open to reflection and debate (Birks et al., 2009; Charmaz, 2014; Ramalho, 2019). At the beginning of this study, they helped to raise the researcher's thinking beyond the level of description (Charmaz & Bryant, 2014), focusing on key interactions and emergent theoretical connections between the sensitising concepts and the empirical data. Later they supported the examination and presentation of concepts and the relationships between them. Finally, the diagrams supported the integration of how the data could be interpreted through a lens of consent – and vice versa, how consent could be understood through the lens of the empirical data (Charmaz, 2020; Charmaz & Bryant, 2014). Diagramming was done differently in each Case Study, to reflect the focus of each case.

In Case 1, Aro Valley (see Figure 3.3), the diagramming started with the key informant interviews – developing an understanding of the influential interactions from each informant's perspective. These interactions were *followed,* by sampling other data, to identify how the interactions had come about, and what they led to. Three controversies were identified in Case 1, Aro Valley, each with its own dataset.

In Case Study 2, the initial focus of the empirical study was on the landscape interactions and identifying controversies within a particular space. The data referring to that space (photographs, interviews, fieldnotes, participant observations) was printed and laid on a contemporary aerial view of the landscape to build up a rich diagram of the contemporary landscape.

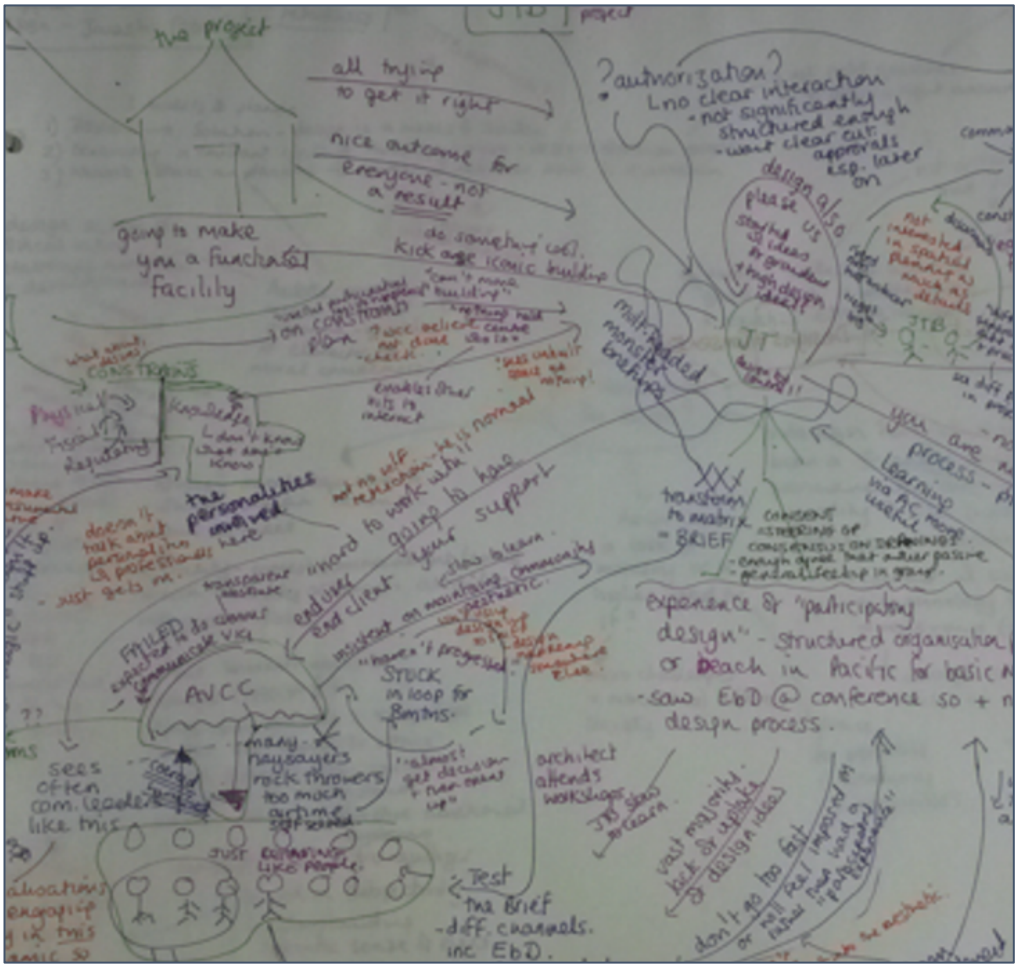


Figure 3.3: An extract from the initial diagram of one key informant interview

This was compared to the intent of the participatory design process, as inscribed in the final set of drawn designs presented to the public in 2010 (see Figure 3.4). This comparison identified four clusters of interactions, where the contemporary landscape deviated from its' participatorily designed intent. The interactions in these clusters were then *followed.* Multiple iterations of data sampling and analysis identified what interactions had led to these changes. This formed the dataset used in the analysis of each change. Each of seven controversies had a dataset of between 150-300 which described the interactions in different ways, from different perspectives.

Figure 3.4: Example of clusters of changes being identified: design drawing and summary description of clusters of changes.

Second, diagramming was used to develop theoretical interpretations. Over multiple iterations a tentative theoretical framework was developed: *The Framework of Informed Consent* (the development of this is examined in detail below in Section 3.4.2). This framework included useful concepts, their inter-relationships, and language appropriate to Landscape Architecture and Urban Design.

So, the analysis now shifted to using this framework to form a more theoretical interpretation of the empirical data (see Figure 3.5). This framework was used with the dataset for each of the seven controversies, producing seven diagrams. The diagrams were compared, to explore the grounded interpretations of the concepts and so hone them. *Constant comparison* and *theoretical sampling* supported a firmly grounded interpretation of how the participatory design process could be interpreted through the lens of consent.

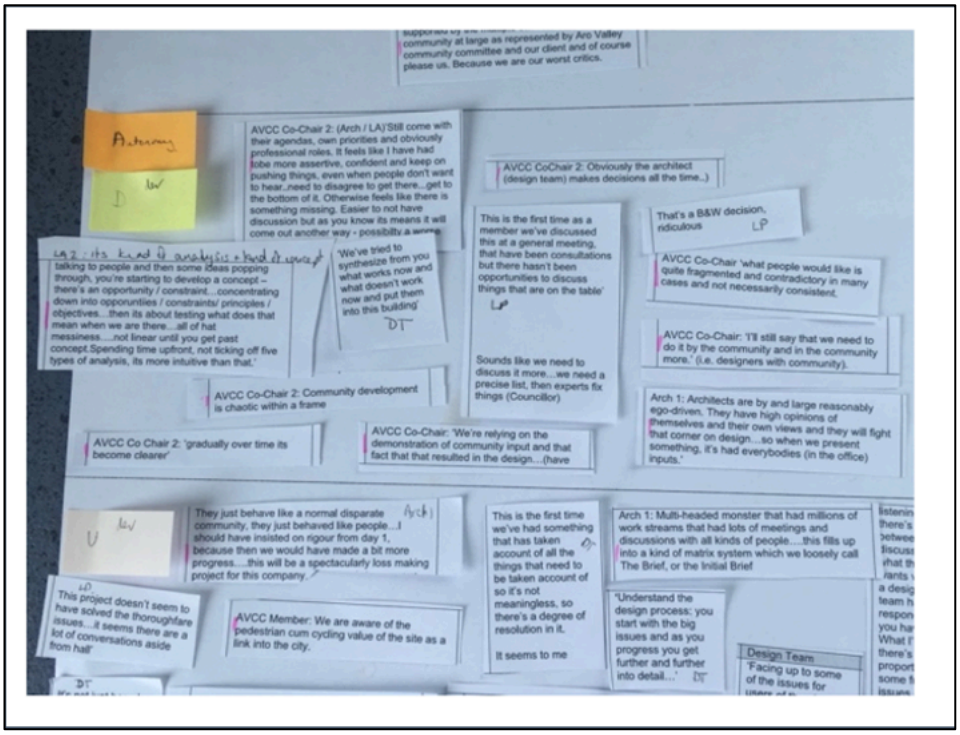


Figure 3.5: Dataset on each controversy laid out in a tentative theoretical Framework of Informed Consent, bottom image is a close up of the intersection of 'autonomy and decision-making'.

3.4.2.3 Story-lining to integrate interpretations of seven influential episodes

Story-lining was used to support *theoretical integration (*Birk et al 2009) and to reach theoretical sufficiency. As a method it provided "both the narrative of the grounded theory and assists the researcher to identify gaps in the theory during the final phases of development" (Mills & Birks, 2014, p. 9). Story-lining was used intensely in the latter stages of the analysis (alongside the theoretically informed diagramming above), to integrate increasingly more concise and structured interpretations of the seven episodes that shaped consent during and from cases of participatory design.

As described earlier in this Chapter, the outcome was seven interpretations - named episodes - as they were thick accounts of deliberate episodes that influenced how consent was shaped in the overall participatory design process. The developed episodes are included as the major part of Chapter 4: Findings Aro Valley (three episodes), and Chapter 5, Findings Grønne Park (four episodes). This use of storylines enables the reader to closely examine participatory design in relation to the novel qualitative concept of informed consent, or as Birks et al. (2009, p. 405) stated "a thousand words paint a picture" and so explain the phenomenon in a way that contributes to theoretical development.

Overall, the episodes are a new type of 'story-line' that 'follow the actors' of participatory design. Their primary concern is to identify influential interactions and then 'follow' them to consider *how* and *why* those interactions limit and enable informed consent. This provides a strong, explicit empirical basis for the subsequent discussion and concluding Chapters, in which the novel understandings of the contingent reality of participatory design practice signal new directions for scholarship and practice and support an appraisal of the utility of consent to other studies and design projects involving participatory processes.

3.4.2 From sensitising concepts to interpretative model: The Framework of Informed Consent

Through the empirical analysis an interpretative, theoretical and grounded model was developed: *The Framework of Informed Consent*. This framework is a further development of the early diagram produced to show the theoretical relationships between the processes and duties of consent (see Figure 2.2 in Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework). The iterative analysis

of the two cases (and their seven constituent episodes) adapted the interpretative model to its novel disciplinary setting.

Then, the proposed Framework of Informed Consent was applied to the seven narrative storylines (episodes), using *constant comparison* to both test and hone the framework itself, and develop summary diagrams of each episode and each Case Study by completing the framework diagram. Each completed framework describes the substantive findings from that episode or case, of how participatory design enabled and limited the shaping of informed consent and, in doing so, exemplifies the utility of this theoretical model. These completed diagrams (found in Chapters 4 and 5) exemplify the utility of the interpretative model – which is further explored in Chapter 6, Discussion and Chapter 7, Conclusion.

This section will now recap the sensitising concepts: the main theoretical ideas underpinning the *Framework of Informed Consent* and then describe the three main ways that the early diagram evolved during the empirical study, in order to create this study's final interpretative model, *The Framework of Informed Consent* (see Figure 3.6)

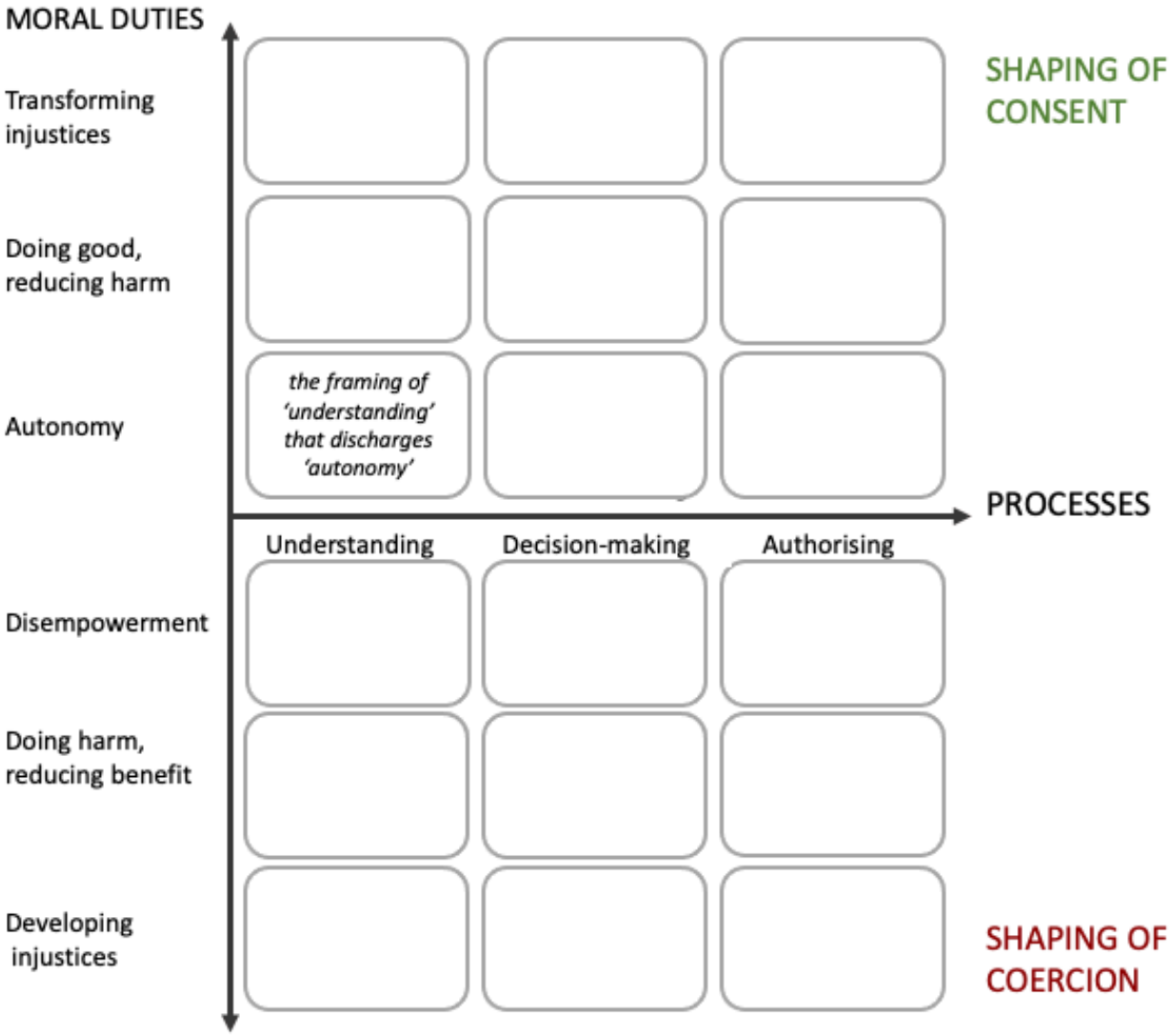


Figure 3.6: The empirically grounded Theoretical Model: *The Framework of Informed Consent*

To recap, the x/y axis shows how informed consent is developed when three moral duties (autonomy, beneficence and justice) are discharged, in order and without coercion, through three processes (understanding, decision-making and authorisation).

There are three main ways in which the initial diagram was developed, during the empirical study, to create a theoretical model suitable for use with participatory design (Figure 3.6). First, the analysis identified that there were dissonant processes shaping consent: the ones that guided the drawn designs and the ones that disrupted them. Therefore, when the framework is applied to each episode, the top half details ideas that shape consent for the drawn designs, the bottom half details ideas that shape coercion.

Second, to ensure that informed consent was clearly articulated as composite, as well as a developmental process, the framework includes a box at each intersect of a process and moral duty. This box is completed for each episode (and then each case) with the framing, idea or interaction that shaped that intersect and influenced subsequent interactions. In addition, the Case Study diagrams include traffic-light coloured arrows. These indicate the development of influence of the composite concepts over the design's development (green = go, red = stop, amber = absent from design development).

Third, the language of informed consent is not familiar within design disciplines. So, the decision was made to develop it for this discipline, but still maintain its integrity. For the processes, the labels did not change, but are now understood as the 'development' of understanding, decision-making and authorisation. 'Development' signals that informed consent and design, are emergent, developmental processes. The language of moral duties was explored through the episodes, to ground meaning in interactions and the storylines of the case studies. But this language needed to be more accessible. So, *autonomy* became *autonomy / self-determination* - applied in a way that considers whose autonomy the collective endeavour of participatory design empowered. *Beneficence* became the simpler language often used in bioethics, by which it is generally understood (as it forms part of the Hippocratic oath): *doing good or at least no harm. Justice* became *transforming injustices* – to reflect the focus of design practice on transforming heterogeneous factors into something valued (Dorst, 2011; Roozenburg, 1995).

3.5 Ethics and Study Limitations

3.5.1 Two countries, two universities

This study was undertaken as a Dual Award or Double Degree PhD, between Lincoln University and Copenhagen University. There is one Case Study from each country. The researcher is native to neither country, albeit with some experience of both, and with significant experience of working in different settings. Therefore, the researcher was well equipped to both predict and respond to possible challenges and discuss and reflect on them with the local supervisor.

There were also differences in research practices between the Universities. At Lincoln University, ethical guidance was provided via the Human Ethics Committee process approval, and via supervision. At Copenhagen University, guidance was provided via a PhD Training Course on ethical research practice. Then the application of that guidance was discussed during supervision.

3.5.2 Working in English

The researchers' first language is English, so required no additional support for the Aotearoa New Zealand Case Study. In Denmark, all key informants had good to excellent English language skills. Additional support with technical terms, e.g., plant names used during interviews, were provided via a Danish supervisor and other specialised colleagues. The Danish research was limited, as already discussed, where non-key informants did not speak sufficient English. This was mitigated through participant observation and interviews on the landscape.

3.6 Summary

In summary, to achieve the exploratory aims of the thesis it adopted a grounded and reflexive methodology. The study focused on interactions between human and non human actors within two Case Study landscapes in different settings, with projects at different stages in the participatory process. In the next Chapter the findings will be presented in the form of episodes from the cases, each with different storylines. The interpretations are framed through the lens of informed consent – and the synthesised findings are displayed on *The Framework of Informed Consent,* developed by this study as both an analytical tool to generate key substantive insights and to exemplify the utility of the framework for future research and practice.

Chapter 4 Findings: Case Study 2, Aro Valley

This Chapter presents the findings from Case 1, Aro Valley. The results from Case 2, Grønne Park are presented in Chapter 5. Both cases commence with a contextual 'origin story'. Findings are then structured around seven different 'episodes' across the two cases. The cases examine to what extent and in what ways participatory design practices enable and limit the shaping of informed consent. Through the seven episodes the findings on how consent was shaped, are articulated in the form of storylines.

Each of the seven episodes focuses on the influential interactions that have changed key landscape elements. The episodes reveal that by following and examining interactions involving landscape elements through the lens of consent, it is possible to identify the interactions between design and local intent. Each Case Study addresses different phases in the life of landscape elements. Case Study 1 focuses on the participatory design process, with reference to the existing local relationship to the place. Case Study 2 focuses on problems identified with the landscape elements once everyday interactions have been re-established following a participatory design process and subsequent design implementation.

The focus of this Chapter, Case 1 Aro Valley, Wellington, includes three episodes, each named after the landscape element that they examine: The Two Gum Trees, The Pinch-point, and The Bunker. The interactions with these landscape elements were key to three groups of local people having problems with the drawn designs. These were a group of activists from a previous era of protests, a group of caregivers, in particular mothers, and a group who focused on stewarding Aro Valley's heritage identity. The project was governed by a co-governance group, including Wellington City Council officers and members of the Aro Valley Community Council. The co-governance group listened to these three groups' concerns and so the participatory design process stalled. The episodes in Case Study 1 all follow a similar story line: the problematic landscape element is introduced. Then, *what* processes and practices led to the problem emerging. This includes an examination of these processes and practices, through the lens of consent, to define findings on *why* a controversy emerged.

There are italicised terms in the episodes. These highlight concepts from the theoretical Framework of Informed Consent. This is only used where the concepts may otherwise go unnoticed.

4.1 Origin Story

This section outlines the spatial, social and policy context relevant to the Aro Valley Case Study. It emphasises the immanent (as defined in section 2.2.2) concerns which have influenced the relationship between local people and their place.

4.1.1 Location

Aro Park is a busy and popular public park in the residential suburb of Aro Valley, Wellington. Wellington is the Capital City of Aotearoa New Zealand. Aro Valley is adjacent to Te Aro, the city centre (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Location of Case Study 1: Aro Park, Aro Valley – adjacent to Te Aro (city centre) (Image: Google Earth 28/2/22, Author's own annotations

Aro Park includes a range of facilities that aim to improve the social welfare of Aro Valley residents and provide some amenities to people in Te Aro. The facilities, as shown in Figure 4.2, include a grassed park, pathways, a basketball court, a fenced playpark, a community run

preschool, a now derelict tennis pavilion, a skate ramp, dense area of native planting, vegetable and flower planters, and a community centre building, all within a total area of 4020sqm.

Figure 4.2: Location of Case: Aro Park when the Site Development process started, main facilities and walkways to higher level Abel Smith Street marked (Author's annotations and masking on Google Earth 21/04/17)

Aro Park's northern and eastern boundaries are close to Aro Valley's boundary with Te Aro, the central business district. Due to the steep topography of Wellington and adjacent sites being at a higher level, the northern boundaries are made up of high retaining walls. Above these retaining walls are houses, garages, and then busy Abel Smith Street. There are two narrows, stepped pedestrian pathways rising behind the community centre to join Abel Smith Street, including providing day to day access for Aro Valley families to their state primary school, Te Aro School. In contrast, the southern end of Aro Park is open to Aro Street, with a small boundary fence, trees, and two points of access.

On the eastern and western sides are businesses and housing. There is also an exit on the eastern edge, behind the playpark fence – to Palmer Street. This provides a through-route for small, wheeled mobility modes (mainly cyclists) and pedestrians. This is a popular route for pedestrians and cyclists, as it avoids the alternative: going down Aro Street and joining the busy one-way system at Willis Street (State Highway 1) (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Location of Case Study 2: Aro Park, close to the intersection with Te Aro and Willis Street/State Highway 1 (Image: Google Earth 28/3/22)

It is important to note that Wellington is unusual in its topography. It is a seismically active city built amongst densely forested, steep slopes, with many lower-level areas at risk of tsunamis, climate-related flooding or earthquake liquefaction. These additional considerations make development harder and more expensive. Aro Valley is known for the steepness of its valley walls, even by Wellington standards. A lack of direct sunlight means damp, poor quality housing and associated social problems are common. The result is that flat land is in high demand

across the city, as is the need for shared community spaces. It is notable that Aro Park includes flat areas, outside risk areas.

4.1.2 Aro Valley: Spatial and Social History

The development of Aro Valley as a residential suburb, is best understood by first understanding how Te Aro, the city centre developed. Te Aro was established as a Māori pā (village) around the 1820s and was divided between Ngāti Ruanui people and Taranaki Whānui (Maclean, 2015). Whilst most of Wellington was dense forest, Te Aro was low and swampy, covered in toi raupō and harakeke. The British forced a sale of the land in the 1840s, seizing it to facilitate the growth of Wellington. The Crown then sold one-acre blocks to emigres and overseas speculators. Housing materials included both native raupō and oak framed kitsets transported by wealthy colonialists from overseas. In 1841, a raupō tax was introduced, and mainly Māori raupō houses were destroyed in an effort to reduce the use of waterproof, insulating but flammable raupō, and further alienate the Māori population and their building methods (Harman, 2014).

Te Aro became the mercantile heart of Wellington, attracting entrepreneurs and labourers. Whilst it was a booming city, a number of earthquakes during the 1840s and 50s, led to the continued use of wood and also European building methods. This approach to development included the particularly steep, damp slopes of Aro Valley (Figure 4.4). As the city grew, the one-acre plots were subdivided, creating slim pedestrian access ways weaving up the slopes between houses. Aro Valley was established as a residential area, inhabited by labourers and workers. In contrast Te Aro's flat areas shifted to being a light industrial area (Maclean, 2015; Menzies, 2018).

Figure 4.4: Example of wooden housing: Holloway Road, Aro Valley c. 1924 (Wellington City Archives)

By the 1960s, Wellington had experienced a shipping slump, a depression and two world wars. Aro Valley was now characterised by the city council as a 'slum', occupied by students and immigrants. It was the focus of municipal and media debate. The municipality was focused on wide-scale urban improvements across Wellington. The municipality considered that they should lead its renewal as they perceived that the residents of Aro Valley lacked a capacity for leadership (Menzies, 2018). They advocated for a Comprehensive Urban Redevelopment Area (CURA). This included marking deteriorating, damp wooden houses for demolition. These would be replaced with high-density housing. In addition, a motorway was proposed to go along the floor of Aro Valley (AVCC 1978-1992; WCC 1972).

However, local people resisted this approach to renewal. They were focused on the lack of community facilities in Aro Valley – asking for churches, libraries, kindergartens and parks. Simultaneously Aro Valley's low housing prices were starting to attract professionals affected by the oil price slump. Old and new residents came together to form a strong local opposition to municipal plans. These residents formed a series of well organised Action Groups. After the

initial protests, the aim was to work cooperatively with the municipality, Wellington City Council. But ultimately this failed – each side blaming the other for taking extreme positions (AVCC 1978-1992; WCC 1974-76, 1972).

4.1.3 Aro Park: Spatial and Social History

During the late 1960s – 80s, the municipality focused on improving private housing and car mobility. In contrast, fuelling dissonance, local people prioritised the special character of local housing and the development of this land as a communal place on and from which to develop people's welfare. From the 1970s there was considerable, ongoing disagreement about how this land and its facilities should be developed and managed. The disagreement played out in public meetings, letters and legal processes between the municipality and local people, and between The Crown and local people (AVCC 1978-92, 1983-84; WCC 1972, 1974-76, 1974-75).

This included two acute situations. Firstly, as previously mentioned, the introduction of a CURA during the 1970s. This included plans to route a motorway along the floor of Aro Valley, and through this precious flat land. The local perspective was that this would 'wipe out the community' (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019). At the time the public place included a community house, which would be demolished (Figure 4.5). The community house's functions included a preschool. Media reports from the time show how preschool mothers 'literally clung to the roof to protect the community house from being pulled down' (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019). They were unsuccessful in retaining the community house, but this experience of community organising led to them developing the aforementioned Action Groups. These Action Groups were themed, with a range of autonomous groups taking the lead on a wide range of local social welfare issues (AVCC 1974-1976).

Image removed for copyright compliance

Figure 4.5: Community House Protest: 'Demolition is not Progress', Wellington accessed from Archives Online (Evening Post 1976)

The second acute situation, in the 1980s, was when the municipality reneged on an agreement to replace the community house with a community centre. Instead, they prepared to sell the land to the Salvation Army, for their Wellington citadel. Local people wanted the land for community uses and noted no local relationship to the Salvation Army. So local action groups "went down at the weekend and painted on the site fence, 'Aro Park', - we had a sense that we needed to identify it" (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019). Key informants identified this event as when it was first named 'Aro Park'. On-going protests brought the community together: "The sense of coming together was enormous, lots of families – including children and street kids who lived on the site" (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019). Most of the site of Aro Park, including trees planted during the protests, were ultimately

bulldozed by the municipality. The debris, including the remaining buildings on the site, were mixed with fill, and used to form the slope now found within Aro Park.

This protest was ultimately successful and Aro Park was not sold. The municipality donated an old school building from another suburb to be a community centre. Local people transported it to Aro Park. Since that time, the municipality and local people have been investing in this centre's development, maintenance and activation. Likewise, the surrounding area, where elements such as planting, seating and play equipment exist, are the products of municipal and local initiatives.

In 1978, the Local Action Groups developed into the Aro Valley Community Council (AVCC). It is still a volunteer group that maintains a focus on enabling autonomous action to retain and develop this place to improve local welfare. Since the AVCC was formed they have debated and lobbied hard, for the upgrading of Aro Park and its community centre. Alongside this, the Aro Valley Community Council has engaged with current concerns and in local and national politics. Aro Valley is a Green Party stronghold, with the highest number of green voters in Aotearoa New Zealand. In particular, the AVCC has sought to support autonomous environmental action, including residents setting up vegetable gardens and compost hubs in Aro Park and also in other vacant lots and road reserves (land owned by WCC adjacent to roads) and even painting their own yellow lines to improve road safety, when they did not receive a timely response from WCC (Fallon, 2017).

Events such as the lively, packed election hustings and public festivals such as the Aro Olympics and Aro Fair are highlights of Wellington's social calendar. But alongside this there are many residents who live in Aro Valley but do not engage in direct action, as it is convenient for the white-collar, public sector city centre workforce – Wellington is the capital city, so many work in government departments, consultancies and NGOs (1Loc2, personal communication, 13 February 2018; 1Loc3, personal communication, 1 August 2018).

The Aro Valley Site Development Process was initiated, and named, by the Wellington City Council (WCC). In 2010 WCC undertook a review of all its community assets to act as a "guide for the Council when it makes decisions about future investment in and disposal of community facilities". This includes spaces, buildings and amenities owned by WCC or partners, that

support local people to “meet their social needs, make the most of their potential and achieve community wellbeing” (Wellington City Council, 2010). The aim was that WCC officers would work from this evidence base, rather than in response to lobbying by local people and councillors. By this time, Wellington City Council saw Aro Park as their asset and renamed the park as ‘Aro Street Park’. This was to differentiate it from another public park, in WCC’s database of assets ‘Te Aro Park’ (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018). Local people resolved their frustration at this by adjusting WCC’s signage – sticking a cut-out heart over the ‘St’ (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 View from Aro Street of WCC’s Aro Park signage, with heart added by local person (Image: Author’s own 04/19)

This policy identified Aro Valley and two other areas as needing investment. Budget was allocated for the Site Development Process during the 10 year plan, called the Long Term Plan (LTP). The LTP identified that the Aro Valley money was to be spent between 2016-18 and would be managed by the Community Services Team (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018). Recognising past problems between WCC and AVCC, and recent thinking on collaborative place-making, WCC established a Co-governance Group. This included one WCC Community Services Officer and three representatives from the AVCC. In addition, the

meetings were attended by a WCC architect, a project manager and a participatory design advisor (the lead investigator in this study), to provide advice.

The timeline in Figure 4.7 was prepared by WCC to communicate the design process after problems arose. It identifies how the participation process began in 2016 – this phase is referred to in this study as the pre-design participatory process. The design team were appointed in mid-2017 by a panel that included both WCC and AVCC (the co-governance group) and an architect advisor from WCC. The appointment emphasised the design team's participatory design experience. The design team initiated the participatory design process with 'design charrettes'. The 'concept design testing', another participatory activity, did not directly involve the design team as they saw it as outside their scope. They decided to prepare a design package to display in the Community Centre. Local feedback was gathered by AVCC, supported by the participatory design advisor, then reported back to the co-governance group and the design team.

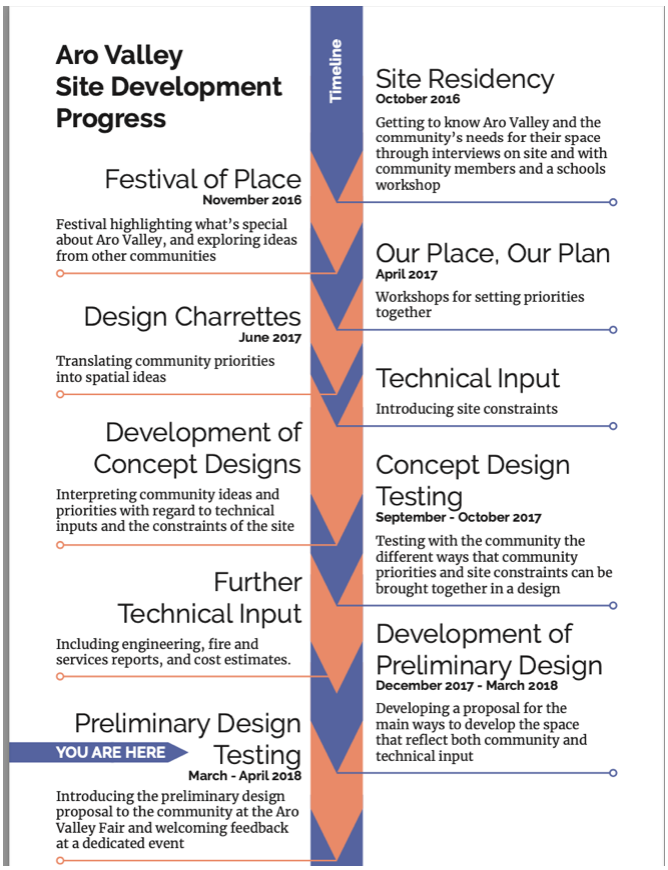


Figure 4.7 Timeline prepared for public communication (WCC 04/18)

4.2 Episodes

This part of the Chapter examines three key episodes during the site development process which contributed to the design process failing. The focus is on how the professional participatory design process shaped consent into drawn designs and how that enabled and limited the consent of key local groups. This supports this study to explore the lens of informed consent and so consider how participatory design can limit and enable the shaping of consent. The three episodes follow the interactions with regards to: Two Gum Trees, The Pinch Point and The Bunker/The Pavilion.

4.2.1 Episode 1: Two Gum Trees

This episode examines how design practices shape local consent by following a controversy regarding two gum trees (Figure 4.8 a-d). It reveals the impact of design practice, in particular site practices. It considers how the focus on empowering the designers' *autonomy* in the design process constrains what local *justice* the design drawings propose. In this case, the site practices used by the design team resulted in an absence in the design drawings – the two gum trees. This raised local concerns, as these two gum trees are fundamental to how local people understand and so communicate their relationship to this place.

Figure 4.8a Aerial View identifying the two gum trees in Aro Park (Author's annotations on Google Earth 29/03/22)

Figure 4.8b-d The Two Gum Trees (working clockwise from top left) - view from Aro Street; view from Aro Street entrance to Aro Park; view from outside the Community Centre; view from Aro Park with rope swing (Image: Top right is Authors' Own 01/10/10; others – Google Earth 29/03/22)

The two established gum trees lie at the edge of Aro Park, along Aro Street and were introduced in the earlier origin story. To recap and develop, the gums were planted by local activists in the 1980s as a protest against WCC proposals to renege on their earlier agreement to develop it as a public place and sell the land. In the words of a leader in those 1980s protests: "we tore up the asphalt…we planted natives and memorial trees. We deliberately worked along Aro Street to make a sense of the place from the streets" and named it "Aro Park" (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019). Much of that planting was immediately removed by WCC diggers, but the protest succeeded. The two gum trees have now grown to become a recognised feature of Aro Park which screen the park from the busy Aro Street, add to the park's character and allow children to climb and build swings in their branches.

This field study observed that during the pre-design participatory process, for the Aro Valley Site Development Project, a group of local people autonomously turned up with display stands. These stands were covered in photos from the earlier protests (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9: Member of the co-governance group reviewing the impromptu addition of protest photos on display stands during the pre-design participatory process, Photo: Author's own (Nov 2016)

Participant interviews and a review of correspondence during the project, identified that these local people had been involved in the original activism. They wanted to dignify the earlier activism and ensure that understanding of it informed the Site Development project. They

understood it was fundamental to the formation of the current public place and to Aro Valley's self-identification as pioneers of community-led social welfare:

"The park and the community centre are a physical record of both the changes in the Valley and of social activism and community commitment. Without this there would be no Aro Park and no community centre!" They are, in the words of Mayor Michael Fowler when he accepted the idea of Aro Park, an embodiment of the limits of power and authority, "… our design ought to reflect our community's proud history and I hope we can consider that history in looking at how we move forward" (1Loc6, personal communication, 17 April 2017).

4.2.1.1 "Missing the Point": A problem with how site practices engaged with the Two Gum Trees

The Community Centre Concept Site plans for the place at the focus of this study (09/17) were displayed in the Community Centre, to inform local people of the designers' thinking and to gather feedback. A local activist attended, who had been involved in the planting of the gum trees in the 1970s. He became agitated when he viewed the Concept Site Plans and left the meeting unable to give feedback – shouting back as he left: "You are missing the point" (Concept Design Workshop, personal communication, 16 September 2017). Others present explained his concerns to the researcher. The issue was with how the two gum trees were shown on the plans. There was a standard canopy template of one tree, and the other was absent. This signalled that the design team did not understand their significance, and so the local relationship to place. Furthermore, the team proposal did not protect the gum trees from removal or damage due to access routes during construction. Local people described their experience that a standard tree can be replaced with another standard tree. These were serious concerns for these local social welfare activists. These gum trees were understood as an artefact of that 'protest heritage'. Their presence provided a physical narration that Aro Valley will fight for local and environmental justice. The trees continued to contribute to that fight, transforming inequities in a suburb where increasingly families have little or no access to green outdoor space (Concept Design Workshop, personal communication, 16 September 2017; Pre-Design Participatory Process, personal communication, 2 April 2017).

The Concept Site Plan (Figure 4.10) focused on the area for immediate development, the site as defined by the design team and graphically masked the area outside it. The edge of the page

did not reflect the local boundaries of this place and the site was a sub-section of that page. Under the mask, the drawing indicated some of the wider area, but cut out one of the gum trees. The other gum tree was indicated schematically on the design drawing - its canopy delineated in a standard way on an aerial photograph as a light graphic that removed its individuality and underplayed its physical presence and symbolic value to the community.

Image removed for copyright compliance

Figure 4.10: Community Centre: Concept Site Plan (Image: Design Team (09/17), annotation authors' own)

A local leader contacted the design team. The reply was that the drawing was “standard”, and “how we do things” (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). The design team concluded their approach was professional and rational – so they did not need to change the design drawings.

This concern, that the trees were not respected and thus protected, was then raised repeatedly by local activists (Concept Design Workshop, personal communication, 16 September 2017; Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). During key informant and participant interviews, local people reflected on this situation. One speculated why the gum trees were misrepresented: “the Council have no intention of taking forward what we want” (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019) and another noting that “I feel powerlessness, this lack of agency that what we’re getting is not meeting my expectations” (1Loc2, personal communication, 13 February 2018).

This exchange reveals how the design drawings were in effect a social contract for local people, defining the designers’ proposed *course of action*. For the local activists and the co-governance group (who were guided by perspectives of key local people), the drawn designs were key. These drawings needed to accurately represent the role the gum trees played in how *justice* was discharged locally. These drawings were therefore vital to how consent was being shaped by the participatory design process.

The remainder of this episode will now explore how design practices contributed to this episode arising, through the lens of consent. As explained in Chapter 2, the first moral duty to be discharged in the formation of consent is autonomy. I will first consider how site practices centred the autonomy of design expertise, before considering how that autonomy influences what justices were subsequently inscribed in the design drawings. The account draws mainly on interviews with the design team and a presentation the design team gave to around fifty local people, including key local activists, at the Aro Valley Community Council General Meeting to review the Preliminary Designs (10/04/18).

Each episode in this Aro Park Case Study identifies a specific group of local people, who were influential in the project stalling. For this episode, the influential interactions were between the local long-term residents who had been involved in past activism (referred to from now on

as ‘the activists’) and the design drawings. Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, identified how the literature on participatory design tends to position the design team as normative. The grammar of informed consent moves this study away from this. So here, the design team are critically examined as a key actor in shaping consent.

4.2.1.2 The thinking behind how the design team empowers the design team’s autonomy

The design team described to me how they understood that their appointment by the client had empowered their *autonomy to do good* here: “the assumption is that a designer is hired to do what they think is best…for this particular community” (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). This brings together the design team’s “burning desire to improve” with their understanding of Landscape Architecture as being about “improving the way the land can provide for the people…enhance what was happening here” (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). The design team also noted how professional practices were focused on empowering them to *develop decisions on how to do good*. They worked on these decisions, as a team, in their office to synthesise the “multi-headed” information streams. This was motivating as they “get a buzz out of connections and creating something meaningful and used” (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018) and they enjoyed going to, “the toughest critic in the office to look at it before it goes public…so you amend or defend your design” (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018).

The design team also argued that their professional autonomy is augmented with a kind of local autonomy. The local activists had expressed concerns that the design team were not from Aro Valley. The design team did not agree with this as a condition for their *autonomy* being empowered here, instead they thought you “get the best person for the job - it’s not necessarily a local person” (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). Nonetheless, they also noted that the location of their office space meant “we’ve worked it out – we are the closest Landscape Architects!” (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). Then, when talking to local people, the design team emphasised their familiarity with Aro Valley: “I have lived in Wellington for about 14 years … (my colleague) lived in Aro Valley for a while ... we run a Landscape Architecture practice just off Cuba Street” (1Des2, personal communication, 10 April 2018), which is in Te Aro, but close to Aro Valley.

However, the activists were not referring to spatial proximity or basic familiarity. They were speculating why the drawn designs did not show their local understanding of the place, what they termed "Aro-ness" (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018), which enabled local people to introduce their perspective, their relationship to this place, to the conversations with designers. This local term is examined further in the other episodes.

The design team described how their autonomy is empowered by their practices, in order to resolve an *understanding* of how to *do good* here*: "*Landscape Architecture is described as a specialised generalised discipline – need to listen to diverse people, technical experts and community experts…gradually with enough dialogue you [the design team] get some understanding" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). They went on to describe the qualities of local interactions that supported a designer to listen to someone else and so from that point to inform the designers' understanding of the place, "[the local person's] freedom and openness is a productive thing" and local people who know the "nuances of the site and have ideas that inspire other [the design team's] more practical responses" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018).

They also described how they dealt with interactions that could potentially disempower their autonomy. When meeting the activists who had expressed concerns, they started by "assuring people that their thoughts had reached us" and that this, "completely took the wind out of their [the activist's] sails…[after] some tetchy emails" prior to the interviews (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). The design team recognised the importance of what could be described as a kind of procedural listening, where the aim is to listen to protect the listeners' autonomy, rather than listening to delve deeply into the speakers' meaning or intent. The design team described this as "showing a willingness to listen – then you [the design team] will be listened to" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018).

The design team also described how 'where' they interviewed these activists was important to their legitimacy – stating that on "the site" was "incredibly valuable for us. The design team described how this showed the activists that they understood that these trees were an important part of the site. That dynamic, that informality…we sat under the trees when we were talking about the landscape, so that's good … [it] said [to the activists that] it was a really important place" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). But the *understanding* that informed the participatory design process and so design development was different – as is examined later in this episode. Perhaps unsurprising as the trees weren't on the 'site' shown in the design drawings. This implicit 'site' of participation was therefore different to explicit 'site' of design.

Making a change to an expanded 'site', to represent the local relationship to place

The design team were aware that the activists had "significant disagreements with the overall approach in terms of the boundaries of the site", and that the local people considered that they were being "constrained by arbitrary boundaries internal to WCC rather than the natural site boundaries" (Concept Design Workshop, personal communication, 16 September 2017). In response, they eventually agreed with WCC to re-consider the wider area; the place as it was understood by the activists. Shifting the focus to developing a "masterplan" for the current project and future ones (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). However, the expansion of the site did not in fact address local activists' underlying concern: the autonomy of the local relationship to place, of the "Aro-ness", within the participatory design process.

Approaching a place as a whole site, before noticing the smaller scales

The designers' started with "masterplan" drawings, considering the place as a whole. Their intention was that a master plan would support them to define the key work within this current budget and then it would guide future projects. They then did "early test drawings to compartmentalise the site", into zones themed by current landscape elements and use. The next task was to consider "how could we get the things to overlap and talk to each other and merge together… so they work together to create benefits", until they noticed "the bizarre nature of it, a collection of spaces that have sort of grown. We had this conversation about it – how do we rationalize it? We shouldn't, we should embrace it!" (1Des1, personal

communication, 1 August 2018). They used this *understanding* of the site to develop a wide portfolio of *design decisions*, "a spectrum of projects" that "could be driven differently – by your group [local people] or the council … [you can] latch onto and collectively drive forward" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). They did not expect all to be built, instead expected to fuel local motivation to take on a project, by providing them with rational options.

The design team's approach to developing an *understanding and decisions* to *do good* here started from consideration of the whole place, before breaking it down into themed zones. This spatial approach used an implicit principle of designing from large to small scale to govern the participatory design process and so constrain the development of design drawings. This differs from the local perspective, which could be described as starting from elements of physical identity, such as the two gum trees. These elements were considered vital to expressing and delivering local ideas of welfare and justice. Local action groups would then develop and support their peers in projects, grounded in local phronesis.

By defining, drawing, and presenting how to 'do good' on site

The design team's approach was to identify "projects". This was done by identifying areas within the site that the design team considered problematic. The design team sought to pivot these problems to create *benefits* - parts of the place that they could "improve" within the projects' *constraints*, e.g., "developing low-cost ways of getting amenity". To exemplify this - first, "a patch of kōwhai and cabbage trees here with a nice gradient", to which they applied a design practice, "ecological overlays", to explore how to "improve" it and so create *benefit*. Their conclusion was, to "use that part of the site for a ramp and children going further to explore up into the site, into the vegetation." Second, that "shelter and shade is a massive issue in Wellington" so they would shift from developing the green area planted by the community to add an alternative one at the back of the site, "with good soil for fruit trees and a meadow" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018).

The design team considered that the purpose of public presentations was to ensure that "design is a situation where communication can happen" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018), because "design is a process, vague gestures to see what the response is" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). Despite this open approach to

communication during design, in practice the designers were focused on using specific feedback, that would inform particular parts of their design process, for example, using "direct response" to the design drawings, in order to "filter" and "start to make connections" between the many proposed projects (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018).

For the design team, the design drawings were "not seduction where I draw whatever I want" but were intended to "honour the consultation – that is purpose enough, otherwise you may get an oppositional stance" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). The design team feared the oppositional stance, recognising that if local dignity, or autonomy, was undermined it could disrupt their own design autonomy here. However, the design team assumed that plan literacy was the primary barrier to maintaining local autonomy. Yet amongst the local activists were many with high levels of plan literacy, including architects, design scholars and planners, and those who'd been involved as critics and clients of previous projects. So, here the absence was not about recognising the two gum trees on the plans and not understanding what the standard tree template described, but about the drawing being an inadequate representation of the *justice* derived from the trees' wider local connection to the place.

In presenting the designs to local people, the design team described what they had learnt from experience and how now, "we don't have a standard way of presenting" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). For example, they avoided, "pattern-making from the sky" in order to improve local people's plan literacy. And they encouraged the autonomy of local people in some public meetings, so local people were, for instance, "drawing on the [designers'] drawing – shared pen ownership" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). On this later occasion, for the AVCC General Meeting to review the preliminary designs (10/04/18) they prepared perspectival drawings, "a 3D diagram only, not a plan" so "all immediately understood where they were" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). However, crucially, the two gum trees were absent from the drawings, as they were behind their vantage point.

The design team expected rigorous debate and a "back and forth, iterative process" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). They described how they would maintain their autonomy during that debate and so centre themselves in the design of beneficence: "as a designer if you accepted 'no' every time you wouldn't survive", instead they would, "ask why,

find another way around" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). The local response would therefore enable the design team to hone down the designs to "find the best use of the funds to improve the place" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). This approach, where participatory design practices are focused on the design team making more informed decisions to progress the design process, obscures the local perspective as the activists' feedback is *constrained* within the design teams' rationale for 'doing good', as set out by the design drawings.

4.2.1.3 Synopsis, with Consent

In summary, this episode showed how the design process, and in particular site practices, constrained the shaping of local consent. Local people looked to the designs as a social contract for the future course of action. They did not share the design team's understanding of the 'site' constrained by artificial boundaries. The local challenges with site practices were deflected by the designers' drawing and listening practices. The consequences in terms of consent are shown in Figure 4.11, which shows how design development was constrained by the treatment of 'site' as a boundary and then as a way of abstracting the area covered by the site from the local understanding of the place - the wider local scales and relationships. Within that boundary, the design team considered they had autonomy, due to their legitimacy as local people and designers. Furthermore, the design team believed that the primary aim of public participation was to get local people to listen to them.

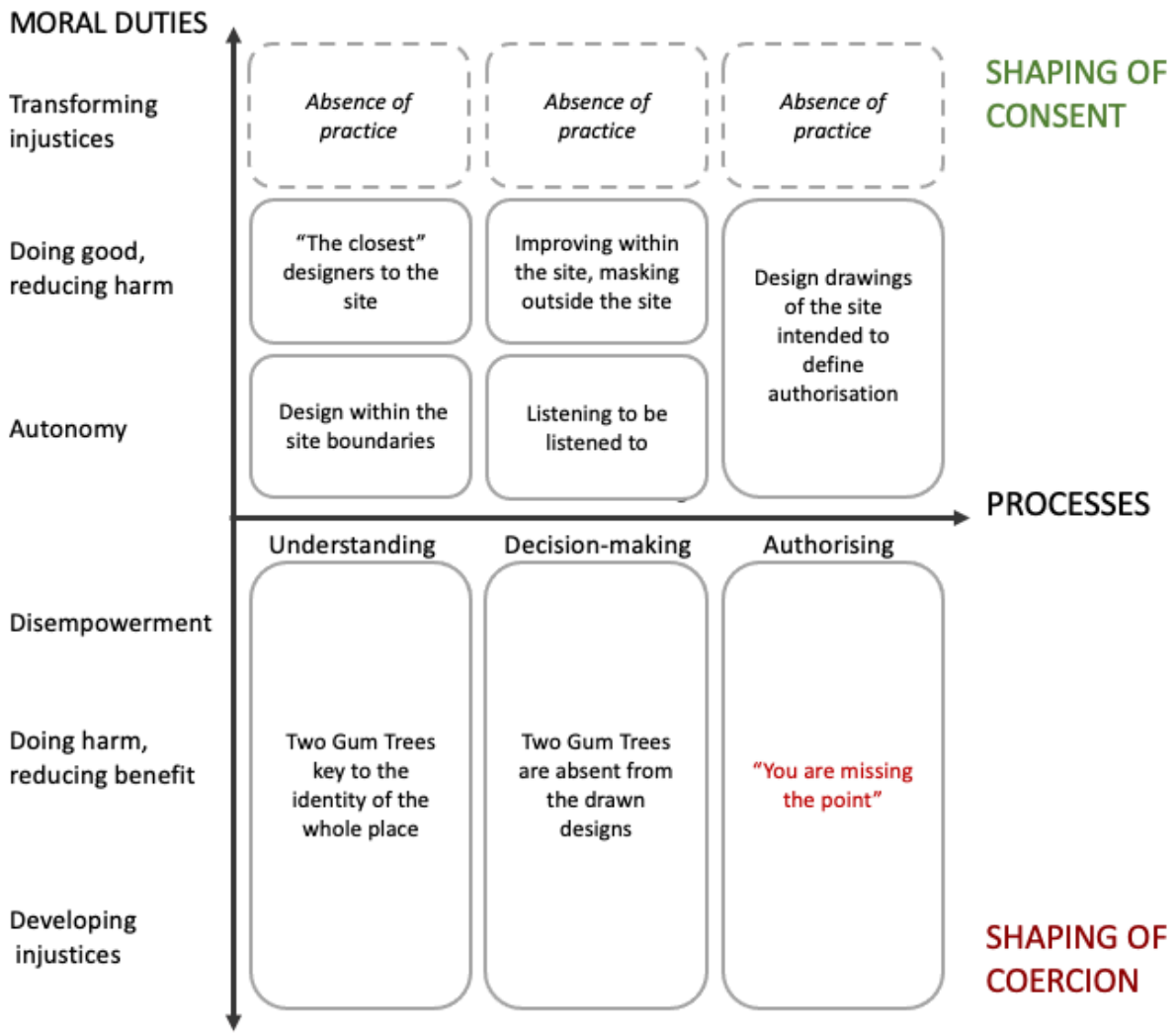


Figure 4.11: The Two Gum Trees, interpreted using *The Framework of Informed Consent*

However, the design team did not consider how to negotiate and so develop greater equity, so did not engage with local concerns about the gum trees. Yet, local people recognised the potency to their identity of the two gum trees. When the design drawings of the site were presented for authorisation and the trees were not included, it signalled that these weren't local designers. Local people described this as the design drawings 'missing the point': the point being to further develop the local relationship to place that fuelled the development of justice.

4.2.2 Episode 2: The Pinch Point

This section examines the controversy surrounding an area known as the 'Pinch Point (Figure 4.12), revealing how design practices enable and limit local consent. The pinch point was a result of two past events which created the physical constraints that narrow the access through the park. First, when an ex-school classroom was moved onto the place by local people, to act as a community Centre. Second, when the playpark became part of the preschool, the Ministry of Education required that it be fenced. Now, Aro Park's Site Development Process project raised the possibility of the pinch point being resolved.

Figure 4.12: Aerial view of the pinch point with relevant landscape features/cycle route entry and exits (Image: Google Earth 08/19, authors' own annotations.

Local people had long-standing concerns about this pinch point, and its potential to cause *harm* to toddlers and young children. As explored in the Origin Story – the pre-design priority setting identified improving the lives of local children as a local value for the future of this place. This signalled that the pinch point changes would be a key influence on local consent. For this episode, the key problematic interactions were between a group of local long-term mothers, grandmothers and other caregivers, and the design drawings. This exploration also considers the influential role of the design team in producing those design drawings and others in shaping consent.

Local people perceived a “conflict of use” at the pinch point because “the main use” was as “a pedestrian-cycle thoroughfare” between Aro Street, Aro Valley and Palmer Street in Te Aro (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). This can be seen in Figure 4.13. The pinch point meant “you can’t see the children come out of the preschool” and the play park gate which is located out of sight when coming from both Aro Street and Palmer Street (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). This route is preferred by many because it provides a safer, quieter route for pedestrians, bikes and other small-wheeled mobility vehicles in an area with insufficient safe cycle infrastructure. This conflict is amplified by the proximity of the residential suburb of Aro Valley to the city centre - Te Aro, and by the development of mountain bike tracks on the outskirts of Aro Valley. The pinch point concern had, for local caregivers “always been a focus” (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018), both in previous local projects and during this one and had been communicated as such to the design team.

Figure 4.13 Viewpoint of pinch point, after entering from Palmer Street end, looking towards Aro Street. Preschool/playpark exit behind lamppost (Image: Authors own 04/19)

4.2.2.1 "Not even Addressed": A problem with how design practices engaged with the pinch-point

The development of local people's consent was dependent on the design drawings describing a recognisable *reduction of harm* at the pinch point. A clear finding across the episodes was that the design drawings were a key tool used by local people to shape their consent – with local people understanding the drawings as the proposed social contract for their future relationship with the place. This contrasted with the design team's expectation (on which it has and will be seen that they based the participatory approach) that their own legitimacy was the primary local concern.

Aro Valley Community Council (AVCC) held a General Meeting (10/04/18). To local peoples' surprise, the pinch point, "was not even addressed" in the designs – it remained the same as it is currently (Figures 4.14a and 4.14b). Despite the proposed re-development of the community centre, "the project doesn't seem to have solved the thoroughfare issues" and that, "I thought it would be widened and not be the pinch point that it is, with the conflict of use that it has now". But the design team stated that they had considered the space and used their professional understanding of current standards to decide: "it's wide enough", and so they were not persuaded to change their design drawings (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). These contrasting perspectives show how different actors' *understanding* of a place framed their perspective on *how to do good and reduce harm.*

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Figure 4.14a (top): Detail from Preliminary Design drawings, as presented at the Aro Valley General Meeting. (Image: Design Team 04/18, Annotation of pinch point is Author's own).

Figure 4.14b (bottom): Detail of 4.16a – of pinch point (Image: Design Team 04/18, Annotation of pinch point is Author's own).

This contrast had an impact on how consent was shaped during the design process. It is notable that local people reported that they could not influence the design drawings of the pinch point. Their autonomy was not adequately empowered within the participatory design process. Local people discussed this during interviews, stating "I don't know the answer to why they [the design team] are producing what they are producing … that's where my lack of agency comes

in" (1Loc2, personal communication, 13 February 2018) and that there were times when, the design team "don't want to hear" (1Loc3, personal communication, 1 August 2018).

In contrast, the design team considered that local people's autonomy had been sufficiently empowered by the participatory design process, stating that the drawn designs were, "not just based on stuff from nowhere, it's totally based on what the community fed back" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018).

This section will now explore the practices, through the lens of consent, which led to this dissonance. Firstly, by contrasting the different ways local people and professional designers develop autonomy through the design process. Secondly, by considering how the professional design autonomy limits local autonomy. Thirdly, by exploring how this limited local autonomy impacts on the decisions that define *how to do good and reduce harm* in the drawn designs. Finally, examining how that led to the design drawings not being authorised by the co-governance group.

4.2.2.2 How local people expected the design team to shape consent here

By being guided by collective local values

The local people of Aro Valley had prepared in advance for the design process. They had undertaken a priority setting participatory process, supported by WCC. The aim was to present a collective understanding to the design team of their social justice intent for the place. This was done in a series of workshops, as described in the Origin Story. The process included workshops that guided local people to identify 300 ideas and together develop shared priorities and values for the place's future – and so how it would develop social justice (Figure 4.15). Incidentally, these collective priorities were in line with the existing AVCC community development programme, affirming their governance role. This participatory process articulated two types of information for the designers to make use of. First, they identified "the core local values". Improving the lives of local children and families were identified as a priority, especially those without outdoor areas at home, as local housing density increased. Second, local people considered how the place was currently enabling and limiting the expression of

these values. The community-run pre-school was a key part of the past and present place. Establishing this pre-school had been a key element in past local activism and enabled this value. The pinch point was identified as a limitation.

Figure 4.15: Pre-design participatory process: an activity where local people prioritised 300 ideas into priorities and values.

The design team found the information provided by local people from this pre-design participatory process difficult to make use of (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). The co-governance group, including local people and WCC staff, insisted it was important for them to delve deeply into the outcomes from those workshops, and build on them in subsequent local participation. It was suggested the design team write a 'reverse brief', an exercise where a design team writes a brief to express what they have heard. The design team disagreed, as they had standard participatory methods they used in all projects. This was based on the Enquiry by Design approach (Participedia, n.d.), that the design team had seen presented at a conference. They led an 'Enquiry by Design' workshop, attended by 40 people. Local people provided information for the design team on the site, not the wider place. This information, on issues on the site, was noted by local people onto aerial plans and then (see Figure 4.16b) summarised by the design team into a chart – quantifying how often particular comments came up (Fig 4.16a).

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Figure 4.16a (left) Design Team's aggregation of data from Enquiry by Design workshop (Design team, 2017)
Figure 4.16b (right) Local people annotating plans at Enquiry by Design workshop (Design team, 2017)

Under pressure from the co-governance group, the design team worked to include the information from the local-led workshops (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). They separated this local-led information out into lists of local ideas about the immediate site for this project and ideas outside the site. The on-site information was included with the pool of information gathered from the Enquiry by Design process. The design team then split the comments into themes. They then scored the themes by identifying local comments that the design team understood fit. The results from this approach did not resonate with the co-governance group's understanding, as developed through their interactions with local people.

In contrast, the outcomes of the pre-design participatory process continued to have legitimacy locally during the design process – with local people referring to them throughout the process, "they [the values] have continued on the whole way through – been maintained by the community" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018). So, local *consent* continued to be contingent on negotiation of better equity, for children and families.

As previously described, this project was managed by the Community Development Team at WCC. WCC both convened and was a member of the co-governance group, indicating that this

was not a municipal client versus local perspective issue. A WCC officer considered that the local process was aligned with their own "community development" approach but the design process was out of kilter, stating that within the design team there "is not an understanding of how to have these slow processes within processes which need to be quick" (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018) This raises a question about what participatory design could learn from other participatory approaches, how they could integrate multiple participatory approaches, and finally how local people could experience a design methodology that is better grounded in the local relationship to place.

4.2.2.3 How the design team attempted to shape consent here

By leading a normative design process

During their interviews, conducted separately, the design team members all referenced the participatory design processes' as having sequential stages, and how the culmination of the differing logics of those stages work to narrow down options and so develop a preferred design.

This process starts with the designer synthesising an overarching concept which will then frame the rest of the design process. The description below shows how enabling the designers' thinking is the focus of this process, with local people providing a stimulus for their thinking: "bring in a whole lot of stuff to the beginning - to form an idea. It's kind of analysis and kind of concept [development] – talking to [local] people and then some ideas popping through…some done internally in mind, scraps of paper, cross-sections – [this] doesn't reach a design but it's a continual test. Out of that are first ideas of concepts, some chucked away, some taken further" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018).

By empowering design team's autonomy

The design team described in more detail the role of local people in design practices and their uncertainty on how to make use of the information collected: "Purpose of workshops – in a lot of cases it's a tick-box exercise. Sometimes more meaningful and often they are even less meaningful – can be seen by some designers as a chore" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). This raises a question about whether participatory practices are empowering or limiting the design team's autonomy, and how to address this disconnect.

Local people's autonomy, in this episode, was limited to providing ideas which the design team could decide if and how to include or exclude. It is worth noting that the design team were honest that it isn't clear to them how local autonomy fits within the design process. This raises a question about participatory design expertise. As well as identifying that the focus of the design team was that the designers' autonomy was empowered. It is notable that the design team did not consider that empowered local autonomy was of particular significance to just spatial change.

In addition, the design team's own values and beliefs played a key role in the development of designs. During interviews, both with key informants and participants, local people explained a concern that the drawn designs showed how "the design team come with their agendas, own priorities" (1Loc3, personal communication, 1 August 2018). This was confirmed by the design team, including one who said during an interview that, "we wanted them [local people] to aspire to something that we aspire to." Local people perceived that the result was that "the weight of [the design team's] expertise led to options being narrowed far too early" (1Loc6, personal communication, 17 April 2017). Another local leader commented that the design process was "charging down the railway tracks as fast as we can, rather than opening up to – are we really building what we want or need?" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018). This concern, that the design team used their own priorities to control and also accelerate design development, raises a question about the parameters of design autonomy in the development of a place.

By synthesising with peers, to define how to do good here

The designers described how they developed decisions: “synthesise what works now and what doesn’t work now and put them into this [design drawing]” (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). All the designers made a comment that explained how the process was, “not linear ... it’s more intuitive than that”. They described how they worked with their colleagues to “fight their corner on the design….so that when we present something it’s had everybody's [in the design studio’s] input” (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). They noted that this process of working with their colleagues helped them to, “quickly come to the conclusion” at each stage of the design (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018). So confirms the local concern, that designers took sole responsibility for *developing decisions on how to do good and reduce harm here.*

This resulted in pinch point *decisions:* “The site constraints were such that we couldn’t reasonably move the building without cocking up the site. It is the fulcrum, the hinge around which all those spread-out spaces work and without it there, there is nothing holding the centre of the site and the centre of the site loses its definition and form … you don’t put the community centre at the edge, you put it at the centre” (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018).

It is notable that this *decision* to put the Community Centre at the centre of the site was led by the architects on the team prior to the appointment of landscape architects to the team. This raises a question about the relative autonomy of different professionals within the design team. The resulting decision centres a built form, the community centre, as how to do social *good.* However, this decision conflates a social principle of ‘centring’ (or prioritising) the local community, with the built form of the community centre. This simplistic approach shows a lack of awareness of how social benefit is discharged by a place. In contrast, local people had started to assess these concerns in the pre-design participatory process. They had identified the outside space as being of significant social benefit to their community, especially to rebalance the inequities between different parts of the community (Pre-Design Participatory Process, personal communication, 2 April 2017).

The impact of an early focus on the built centre was that the first three options shown to local people (Concept Design workshop, 09/17) spatially centred a new or refurbished Community Centre, but all had a narrower pinch point, and some had reduced the playpark (Figure 4.17). Yet, the playpark had been locally identified as an asset that resolved, and could further resolve, inequities in the suburb. Until local people raised their strong concerns the design team were unaware that the design drawings showed a reduced playpark and of the significance of doing that. The design team had not engaged adequately with the pre-design priorities and so had not connected the spatial feature, a playpark, with the local social justice intent to improve the lives of children.

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Figure 4.17 Detail from Concept Designs: three options for the pinch point (Image: Design Team, 2017)

The design team responded with a *decision* in the next drawn design - to retain the existing pinch point on the Preliminary Designs. They added detailing to that pinch point, to mitigate local concerns. At the General Meeting (04/18), they described this detailing as taking a "multimodal approach of having texture, having lighting, having soft edges and having a little bit of notional constraint" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). They also encouraged local people to appreciate the space rather than have concerns for how it would *do harm*, "it's a really great bit of the site because you catch people's eyes … it's really positive." Local feedback indicated this was not an adequate response (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018).

By arbitrating between local people

The design team described the ways in which they responded to different local ideas. They noted there were "strong personalities coming in and making their ideas known", they described them as, "negative" and "corrosive", having "pushed" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018) and they received their input as "somewhere between entertaining and enlightening" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). They saw their role was to arbitrate between different local ideas, often intentionally reducing the influence of loud voices so it was, "fair, I can't think of anybody who was disadvantaged" (Arch 2, personal communication).

One local leader described the impact of this approach, "there have been consultations but there haven't been opportunities to discuss things" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018). And that it didn't reflect the value local people placed in each other, "it's been a very greenfield visioning exercise in which everyone's been equal and then that is refined down [by the design team], and a lot of people are very disappointed … [particularly] people with experience [of the place]" (1Loc5, personal communication, 2 February 2018). Another commented on the resultant decisions in the designs: "progress is lovely, but many people were like – where is the stuff we talked about? We talked about interesting stuff … what you've come up with doesn't have any of that stuff in it" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018).

So, the participatory design process did not support the local deliberation of how to develop *greater equity and justice*. And as previously mentioned the participatory design process did side-line other participatory practices that did include deliberative processes.

By drawing on, and from, an adult, male cyclist's perspective

During the interviews, a number of local women mentioned their struggle to be understood by the all-male design team, who didn't have experience of being primary caregivers. One local leader described her discomfort: "I'm the only woman [in meetings with designers] … it feels like I have to be more assertive, confident and keep on pushing things, even when [the design team] don't want to hear" (1Loc3, personal communication, 1 August 2018). This dynamic was

also observed at co-governance meetings (fieldnotes and PI dates) and a General Meeting (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). For example, at the General Meeting, feedback on the pinch point was mainly from women. They explained how as mothers and grandmothers, they were personally familiar with the nuance and detail of the problem because they regularly used the pre-school and play park with small children. The women encouraged the designers to move the discussion from their power-point of design drawings. These drawings showed the view from each end of the pinch point. Instead, the women proposed they go outside and experience a different perspective, by standing at the pre-school gate. The design team declined. The design team's focus was on the meeting efficiently gathering and recording feedback on all aspects of the design drawings, with all attendees together. But the women could not describe their perspective using the drawings, their autonomy was not empowered by what was shown in the design drawings. The design team instead repeatedly explained their professional experience of managing multi-modal mobility, also drawing on their experience as regular cyclists (e.g., how you manage cyclists with different design features). Local women explained that didn't empower toddlers and their caregivers to move freely.

Towards the end of the discussion, one design team member proposed they arrange another meeting for these women. They proposed that the design team would chalk out the changes at the actual pinch point. The women could then better understand how the designers' expertise led to the design drawings and so the women would accept the design decisions. However, the design team were assuming that the local women's challenge was due to their lack of plan literacy. This was unlikely given that the women included quite a few people familiar with reading plans, both professionally and from previous site development projects. One women's comment on this interaction was that it was, "ridiculous" (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018).

In summary, the experiential perspective of adult cyclists became the visual perspective from which the future space was drawn. This disempowered the autonomy of female caregivers, and their small children during the participatory workshops. Yet local people had clearly set out that one priority for the design programme was to re-negotiate spatial equity so that children had greater autonomy in this place.

In addition, it is notable that the design team assumed local people did not accept the proposals because they did not understand the design drawings and also that women were finding it hard to be listened to. This raises the question of how designers' reflexivity is guided during the participatory design process – as it was not by local understanding of social justice.

By presenting a professional rationale

When the design team presented the designs at the General Meetings, they stated that it was, "the first time we've had something that has taken account of all the things that need to be taken account of…so it's not meaningless, so there's a degree of resolution in it." (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). In the co-governance meeting prior to the General Meeting, they were confident the designs would meet local approval (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018).

After this meeting, the design team reflected during an interview about why the designs had not been accepted by locals. They considered that the co-governance group were being coerced into not approving the design drawings: "I think they get pushed and that's pretty invidious and horrible for them. And that's probably why they find it hard to be decisive. Because there is a lot of pressure coming from small groups" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). In contrast the co-governance group considered that their mandate was to be guided by this local support (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019). During interviews, local leaders and municipal officers on the co-governance group were directly asked about coercion – they said that they did not experience other local people coercing them. Instead, they identified that they took seriously the views of certain local people, including these female caregivers (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019; 1Loc3, personal communication, 1 August 2018; 1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018).

The design team's analysis of the situation was that local people could be split into "evolutionary thinkers and revolutionary thinkers", noting that those who trusted the design team's principles and constraints were "evolutionary", and the others were, "revolutionary" (1Des1, personal communication, 1 May 2018). They used this to characterise the local people

more broadly, stating that the "revolutionary" local people would never agree with any change here. So, they counselled the co-governance group to ignore the revolutionary thinkers. Instead, repeatedly, the co-governance group asked the design team to work with key local people to better understand their perspective and re-develop the design drawings.

In reflecting on the design process, the design team resolved that in future they would not allow a co-governance group to say "no". They would instead work to, "speed up the process…'cause you want to get it built" (1Des4, personal communication, 13 February 2018). Their proposal was for more "rigour and focus" through a "structure and set of milestones" to achieve "acceptance of the (designs') core values" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). They also proposed that there should only have been "one iteration of workshops" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018), after which the designers would develop the designs. Therefore, they sought to strengthen how participatory design empowered design autonomy and reduce the way that local people were empowered through the other two participatory processes.

This episode shows how a design team introduced a participatory design process, but it did not align the designs with a local perspective – instead it ignored it. 'Perspective' could be alternatively described as how the place should be changed so it was more authentic to the values and beliefs of local people: strengthening their relationship to the place and the justice it discharges. Instead, the design team used the participatory design process and design practices to empower their own values and beliefs to define a tangible design result that they considered would improve the place.

It is notable that the pinch point was well-suited to a design process, as it was a wicked problem and it did not have an obvious solution that suited all. So, both the design team and local people recognised that a negotiation of relative equities needed to take place (i.e. one group's interests needed to be put first). Local people clearly communicated that that group should be small children and their families. And so local people challenged the equity, weighted towards adult cyclists, that was inscribed in the drawn designs. Their challenge was unheard as the design team considered local people had a lack of plan literacy and/or a 'revolutionary' disposition. However, this analysis shows that local values and beliefs about how to care for local children, were not adequately expressed in the drawn designs. While there was not an

obvious designed solution, given the physical and social constraints on this intersection, it is clear that participatory design practices focused on defining a normative proposal for how to *do good and reduce harm*. This was based on the designers' perspective, rather than through introducing practices to help communicate or negotiate how local people defined justice for the comprised solution.

4.2.2.4 Synopsis, with Consent

This section summarises this episode, using the theoretical Framework of Informed Consent developed by this study. This will be done using a diagram, with a brief written summary to guide the reader.

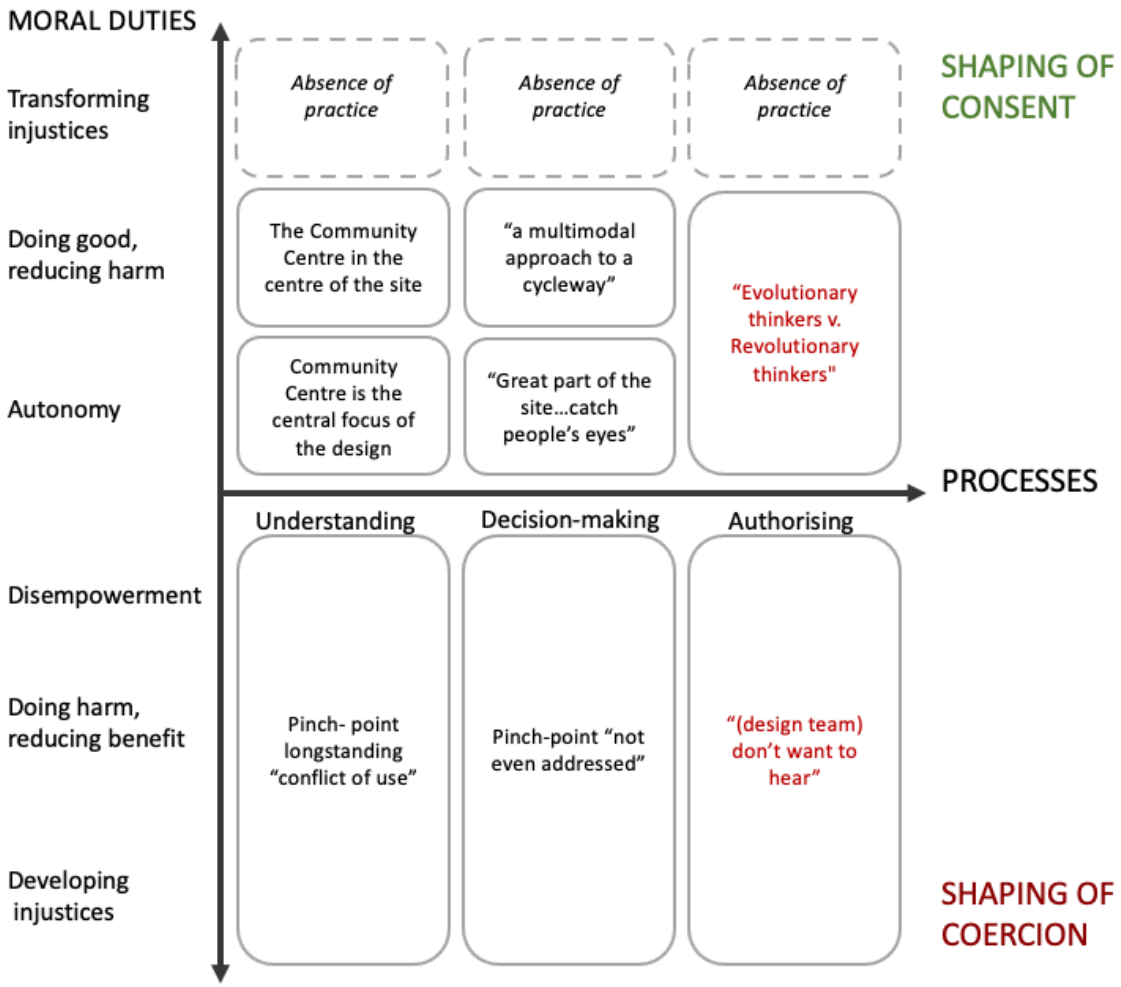

Figure 4.18: The pinch point, interpreted using *The Framework of Informed Consent*

This framework (Figure 4.18) shows how the primary focus of the design team was on the community centre building, which was translated into doing good by positioning the community building in the centre of the site. The pinch point was understood in the designs as beneficial, as a place to 'catch people's eyes', which needed some adaptions to support its use as a cycleway. In contrast, local people considered the pinch point as a point of conflict, and noted it wasn't addressed in the designs. When this challenge was raised, the design team focused on a way of conceptualising local dissenters as people not working within the constraints of the project's primary focus; the community building. The design team sought to delegitimise them as 'revolutionary'. This was experienced by the co-governance group as the 'designers don't want to hear'.

4.2.3 Episode 3: The Bunker/The Pavilion

This episode reveals a controversy about a building, locally named and referred to in this analysis as 'the bunker' and 'the pavilion' (Figures 4.19a-d). Both names are referenced by research participants. It considers how the empowerment of different autonomies influences how social equity can be developed here, and highlights 'heritage' as a facet of how consent is shaped.

'The Bunker' is behind the current Community Centre (see Figure 4.19b). It sits in a corner with retaining walls on two sides, the adjacent sites being higher ground. The Bunker has had a number of past uses. It was originally designed for use as a Tennis Pavilion (1937) with courts in front, where the Community Centre is now located (Fig 4.20). It has since been used as an office for AVCC staff, a shed for gardening equipment and a cool store during the annual Christmas Tree sale, a key and well-known community fundraiser. Its façade has also been used for graffiti projects (see Figure 4.19a). Graffiti is considered by local people, as part of the area's aesthetic identity and has been supported by a youth programme led by graffiti artists (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018; Pre-Design Participatory Process, personal communication, 2 April 2017).

Figure 4.19a (top left) View from the end of the Community Centre of The Tennis Pavilion/The Bunker (Author's Own, 12/2017)

Figure 4.19b (right) Aerial View of The Tennis Pavilion/The Bunker (Google Earth, 29/03/22 with Author's annotations)
Figure 4.19c (middle bottom) View from the end of the Community Centre of The Tennis Pavilion/The Bunker (Author's Own, 04/2019)

Figure 4.19d (bottom left) View down the side of the Community Centre of The Tennis Pavilion/The Bunker (Author's Own 04/2019)

Local people have found 'the bunker' challenging to use. First, its location means very limited sunlight, with none in winter – leaving users cold and damp. More recently, structural problems were identified. WCC declared the bunker unsafe and it is now closed. At the time of the study fieldwork, "the bunker has been derelict for some years and that influences perception" (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019) of its value (see "keep out" signs on steps on right of pavilion in Figure 4.19a).

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Figure 4.20: The Tennis Pavilion / The Bunker at its official opening in 1937 (Evening Post, WCC Archive, 1937)

For 'the bunker' episode, the influential interactions are between the co-governance group, a group of local long-term residents who have acted as advocates and stewards of local character and heritage ('the stewards'), and the design drawings. The analysis will extend from this interaction to examine the role of the design team in producing those design drawings.

To recap, Wellington City Council introduced a co-governance group to improve relationships (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018; Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). This group jointly decided on a participatory design approach to developing the space. They considered that participatory design was, (as described by one WCC staff member on the co-governance group) "about community cohesion and recognising that each place is different and it's not a simple solution of a building. It's more community development based, and the community of Aro Valley being able to take more ownership and guardianship of that" (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018). This clarifies the value that WCC places on local people's participation.

The co-governance group were aware that preserving 'the bunker' had been a key long-term concern around which some long-term local people had connected (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). These local people considered it a rare example in Aro Valley of an architecturally designed building from that era (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019; Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). These local people were widely respected within the Aro Valley due to their past activism, local leadership and volunteering. In reviewing the interactions, local people reported deferring to these local people as stewards of a valued local identity (co-governance group per comms, interviews). The local stewards included people with professional expertise in architecture, planning and community development, as well as their local experiences of activism and of making legal challenges to proposals of spatial and social development of Aro Valley.

It became apparent, during discussions about 'the bunker' that the co-governance group role was not the contractual client, instead they would authorise each stage in the designs' development (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018; Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). This participant observation and document research of the co-governance group revealed that the authorisation process focused on whether each stage of the drawn designs reflected the local priorities and values. In developing their decision to authorise the designs, the AVCC members of the co-governance group used their local experience, past and present, to consider the risks and benefits of the design drawings. The risks, based on previous projects in Aro Valley, included the local stewards responding with time-consuming and costly activism - including legal action (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019; 1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018; Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). A collateral risk was that this activism caused local harm, including exhaustion, and distracted volunteers from other local social welfare programmes (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019; 1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018; Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018). The benefits of the local stewards' support included: the designs would resonate with local people, encouraging them to participate in local social welfare programmes (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019), and further materialise Aro Valley's distinct and well-known identity as a hub of social and environmental activism and

political debate (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2018). It was understood, by both WCC and local members of the co-governance group, that a place that reflected the local identity would motivate and empower local people to feel and work together for their local collective good (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019; 1Loc2, personal communication, 13 February 2018; 1Loc3, personal communication, 1 August 2018; Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018).

In addition to participatory co-governance and participatory design, the Origin Story described how a pre-design participatory process was done to prepare for this project. In sum, local people worked together to set priorities for the spaces' development. There are two priorities that are relevant to this episode: greater care for people experiencing homelessness, and valuing heritage. The discussions related to these priorities referenced the bunker/pavilion (Pre-Design Participatory Process, personal communication, 2 April 2017). These priorities were also reiterated by local people during interviews and in communication to the co-governance group during the participatory design process. For example, the bunker could be used to "support homeless people, migrant drop-in centre, a shower, maybe a semi-dry area for children in winter" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018).

4.2.3.1 "Sanitising Aro": a problem with how design practice engaged with the Bunker.

This problem came to a head when the design team had developed a set of Preliminary Design Drawings. They were made available to local people via the Aro Valley Community Council website and were displayed for five days within the existing Community Centre. These drawings were annotated by the design team with a series of key points. One stated that the design team's *decision* was that "demolition of the bunker is recommended". There was no rationale presented (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018).

One local steward stated how these drawings did not reflect the two priorities; "I was so disappointed that they [the design drawings] were so limited…after the broad range of values [the priorities] identified and [so] all the things that one could look at" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018). In addition, participant observation of this display, communication between local people, the design team and the co-governance group during

this period and interviews with co-governance members, identified that local stewards repeatedly approached the co-governance group about the decision to demolish the bunker (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various 2016-2018; Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). The stewards' interactions coalesce two concerns; that the overall designs did not reflect local values and priorities and that local heritage, the bunker, was being demolished. They proposed therefore that the bunker could be used to enable those values and priorities.

Valuing heritage was identified in both the pre-design participatory process and the participatory design workshops referring to particular buildings (e.g., the bunker) and planting (e.g., the two Gum Trees). This was one of the priorities identified in the locally led pre-design participatory process and it was further developed during subsequent correspondence and public meetings with the co-governance group and design team. One local leaders' response to the Preliminary Designs was that "living heritage has been a key part of my activism for over 40 years…the bunker provides opportunities to ground memories of the Valley and the creation of the park" (1Loc6, personal communication, 17 April 2017). Another explained that the bunker façade was part of "our community's proud history" (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). These local understandings of the value of the bunker as heritage are not only explicit about why it is valuable, but also identify the bunker as part of the sum which makes the whole place's identity, highlighting that the façade has particular heritage value. The local stewards concluded that the design drawings showing a demolished bunker meant that: "the designers are 'sanitising' Aro" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018) and this contributed to "on-going concerns about the lack of Aro-ness in the designs" (1Loc1, personal communication, 2 April 2019).

The local stewards also felt that the drawn designs did not support better equity for local people than the status quo as "there hasn't been anything achieved by expanding the building [community centre] and the place that somehow warrants [$]1.2 million or even doing the work" (1Loc4, personal communication, 14 February 2018). Local stewards concluded from the drawn designs that "documentation [from the design team] shows little investigation or consideration of the overall impact of the decision" (1Loc6, personal communication, 17 April 2017).

They identified that if heritage was valued, the bunker would be retained and enable local people to support those experiencing homelessness; "we would actually get more useful space if all we did was refurbish the bunker" and another stated that "if basic restoration is done on the bunker, then there may well be a community-led project to do fit out and create usable spaces" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018).

4.2.3.2 How the design team attempted to shape consent here

By defining a client.

Whilst the design team expected the co-governance group to provide "feedback on the designs" (1Des4, personal communication, 13 February 2018), the co-governance group saw their role as *authorising* the designs once they reflected on local people's values and priorities, an overall "Aro-ness". The design team reported, during an interview, that they had advised their client, WCC, that the co-governance group's request to meet again with local people would undermine the design process, as it was "weighted too heavily towards getting a nice outcome for everyone and not heavily enough towards getting a result" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). The design team considered that WCC "were our client", and that they should recognise the design's continual development, based on the professional rationale provided by the design team for how to improve this place (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). This difference of views meant "we haven't progressed or changed our designs, but we have taken eight months" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). This raises a question about the different approaches to shaping consent: how does participatory design autonomy align with other participatory practices? Noting how the participatory design process is normally governed by a paying client/professional relationship, the design team propose a professional rationale for their decisions on how to do good, which is enhanced and then recognise by the client.

By introducing their own 'heritage', in the form of their aesthetic

The design team stated that their review of the local area concluded it had no architectural identity (1Des4, personal communication, 13 February 2018). Hence, they focused on developing design decisions about how to do good by using their normative "high design ideals" in order to create a "kickass iconic building in this community … that wins awards" (1Des4, personal communication, 13 February 2018). This had included a series of precedent sheets in the earlier Concept Design presentation (Figure 4.21). The design team noted that the result was a "lack of uptake … by the vast majority of the people" (1Des4, personal communication, 13 February 2018), but at that stage they were not concerned as the design team understood that a key aspect of their autonomy (and professional identity) was to define a project's aesthetics.

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Figure 4.21: Detail from Concept Design Presentation: photos from Aro Valley (top row) and precedent buildings (Design Team, 2017)

One co-governance group member noted during an interview that "the designer [has] definitely got some specific [social] values … [and] his aesthetic is quite visible" (1Loc3, personal communication, 1 August 2018). One member of the design team described how when the project stalled, they recognised that local people wanted a "much closer fit with the … building typologies that already exist", noting "that [the message] has been gently but insistently pushed by the community committee [co-governance group] and the main people who have attended the engagements" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018).

The design team did not recognise that valuing heritage was a social justice concern and sustaining and developing "Aro-ness" would empower local people's autonomy – and so the local contribution to voluntary social welfare programmes – which would potentially include delivering some projects proposed by the design team. This split between what heritage's autonomy could achieve, awards and iconic buildings versus greater social equity resulted in local autonomy being disempowered. Co-governance members and local stewards described their confusion and frustration with this situation (1Loc2, personal communication, 13 February 2018, personal communication, 13 February 2018).

This confusion, which at its heart is about defining how the built environment shapes local equity, and so consent, raises questions about what practices design professionals have available to them to negotiate equity between local people and with landscape elements, and so what the boundaries of their (and local people's) role is in shaping local consent.

By constraining who defines what heritage means

WCC and some local people held different views on local heritage. As described, local people identified valuing heritage as key to the place's social value. In particular, valuing the bunker's façade. In contrast, Wellington City Council maintains a heritage schedule which lists details of all Wellington's historic heritage and reported that, "the bunker is not heritage", noting that the "community don't understand what is needed to be heritage" (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various -2016-2018). Separately, WCC did agree with local people that it was vital this design had "respect for this place – identity is really key and has come through in all the discussions we've had" (1Mun1, personal communication, 13 February

2018). However, as described above, the design team considered they were forging a building with an iconic aesthetic identity, not developing a place that already had one.

The design team's response to their client, WCC's position, and the local "heritage values" was eventually to propose a revised design for the bunker that was "a middle ground and kept some of it" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). When they presented the designs, they described their design drawings as keeping "the memory of the site [is] something that we've tried to come through in all our drawings" (1Des2, personal communication, 2 August 2018). In practice, they retained the foundations of the bunker but not its façade. Their focus was to instead search out other existing elements to value. Their primary focus became "the strange relationships of buildings or memories of objects … [which is a] really great thing culturally and also ecologically" (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). These relationships were not something local people or WCC had identified as part of the place's heritage or identity. Also, the design team were not aware of how the 'relationships' had come about, leaving a question about whether they were responding to these relationships as 'heritage', or just as a thing to preserve. This raises the question, again, about the role or autonomy of the design team in determining what heritage is, and also about their understanding of how heritage empowers local autonomy to shape place-based equity.

By defining rational constraints

Before working with local ideas, the design team developed a series of what they considered to be *rational constraints* to frame the design process. The first constraint was cost as "the tennis pavilion or bunker is unoccupiable in its current state" and they expected there would be "a large cost involved to make it safe and useful" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). Second, the design team had developed an understanding of the bunker site which focused on how it was *harmful*, rather than on how it could *do good* as "shelter and shade is a massive issue in Wellington, the pavilion is in a shady damp corner". These *professionally rational constraints* diverted understanding of the bunker within the design

process away from local understanding – it was understood as an environmental and structural problem – and so should be demolished.

As a result of local feedback, the design team reworked preliminary design drawings to show some future *benefit* from the bunker; "if we make more light there it will be easier to maintain" (Preliminary Design Presentation, personal communication, 25 April 2018). They proposed demolishing the façade and walls but retaining the bunker's foundation. This would create an outdoor space which could only be accessed via a door from the Community Centre (Figures 4.22a and 4.22b). There was a high gate to prevent ad-hoc public access. This would ensure people experiencing homelessness would not sleep there – as the design team understood them to be *harmful* to this place: "it's a choice, we need to move them [people experiencing homelessness] on" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018). When questioned on this assumption, they reflected that local people did not understand homelessness, but the design team did, due to prior experience with state housing. This did not account for the local social welfare programmes and the participation of local people experiencing homelessness in the pre-design participatory process> This raises the question about how successfully a design team can make judgements about how to define social equity and so how the boundaries of *professional* autonomy may limit *local* autonomy.

This in turn raises further questions of how to value heritage when re-designing it and about designers' autonomy to filter and redefine how local people intend to develop social equity.

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Figure 4.22a (top): Detail from Design Presentation: render showing the courtyard behind the Community Centre (Design Team 2017

Figure 4.22b (bottom): Detail from Design Presentation: aerial view of courtyard behind Community Centre (Image: Design Team 2017)

At a subsequent co-governance meeting, local leaders expressed a concern that the changes to the bunker may lead to local people derailing the site development process. They noted fears for how the shift in heritage elements would impact more widely, on how local people negotiated greater social equity (Co-governance Meetings, personal communication, various - 2016-2018). The design team's response was that these people were not "accepting the

physical constraints of the project" (1Des3, personal communication, 12 February 2018), and so their feedback was not relevant to the design process.

4.2.3.3 Synopsis, with Consent

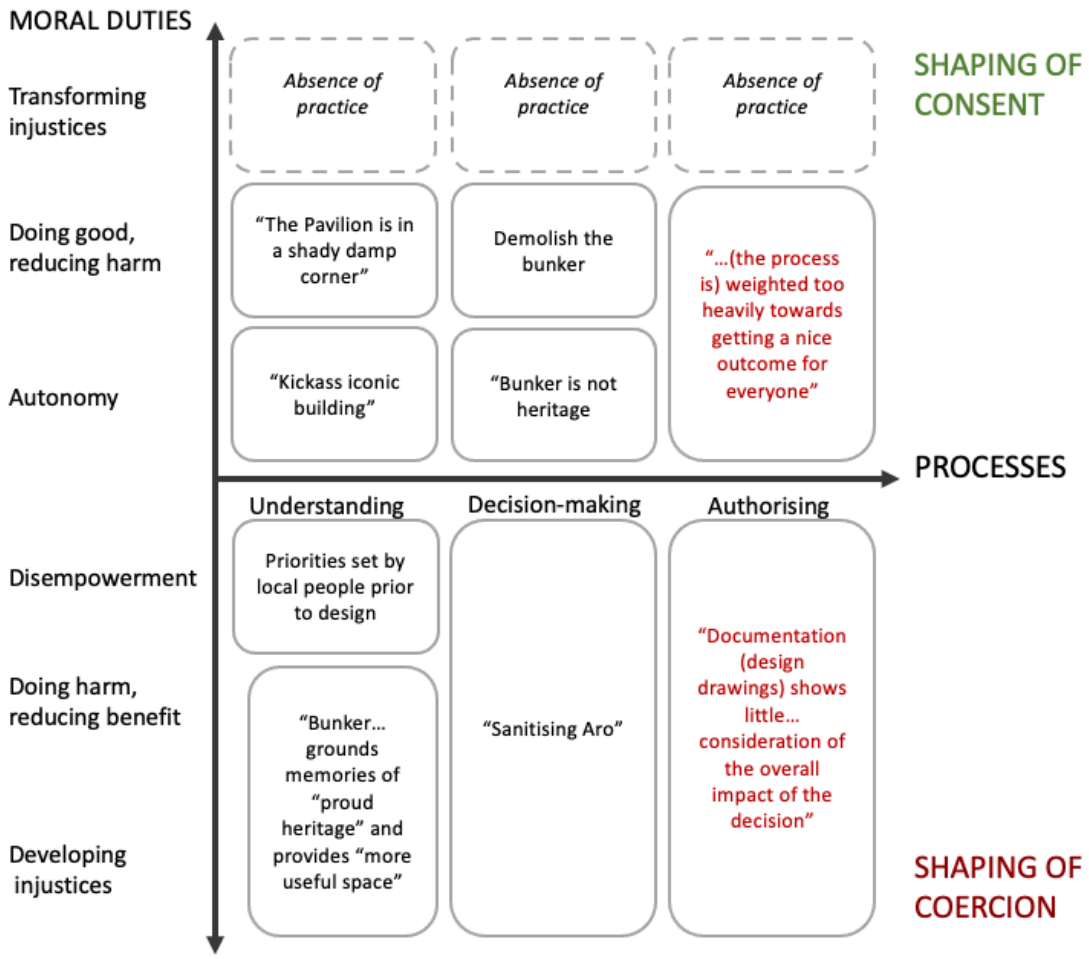

Figure 4.23 The Bunker/Tennis Pavilion, interpreted using *The Framework of Informed Consent*

In summary, this episode shows how different expectations, constraints and practices that empower the autonomy of the design team and of local people shape consent – in this case, to create dissonances around heritage.

The framework (Figure 4.23) summarises how the design team's primary focus and budget application was on designing a 'kickass iconic' community centre. This left the pavilion as outside their scope – especially as it was in an undesirable position on the site. In contrast, the local people had identified heritage as a priority in their pre-design participatory process and

further explained its value as ‘proud heritage’ during the participatory design process. The design team disagreed, noting the bunker was not on the municipal heritage list and proposed it should be demolished. The local people considered the replacement of the heritage with an architect-aesthetic building as ‘sanitising’ their suburb – they noted the design team had not given the bunker particular attention. In response the design team considered it wasn’t their job to please everyone by spending time on more interactions with local people. They wanted to work on their primary focus: an iconic the community centre.

4.3 Key Findings

The Aro Valley Site Development Process Case Study examined the interactions during a participatory design process aimed to develop a local place used by the community, in the context of past conflicts between local people and the municipality. The participatory design process included the use of practices which supported the design team to engage with local people, but ultimately it stalled when the project co-governance group refused to recognise on-going design development.

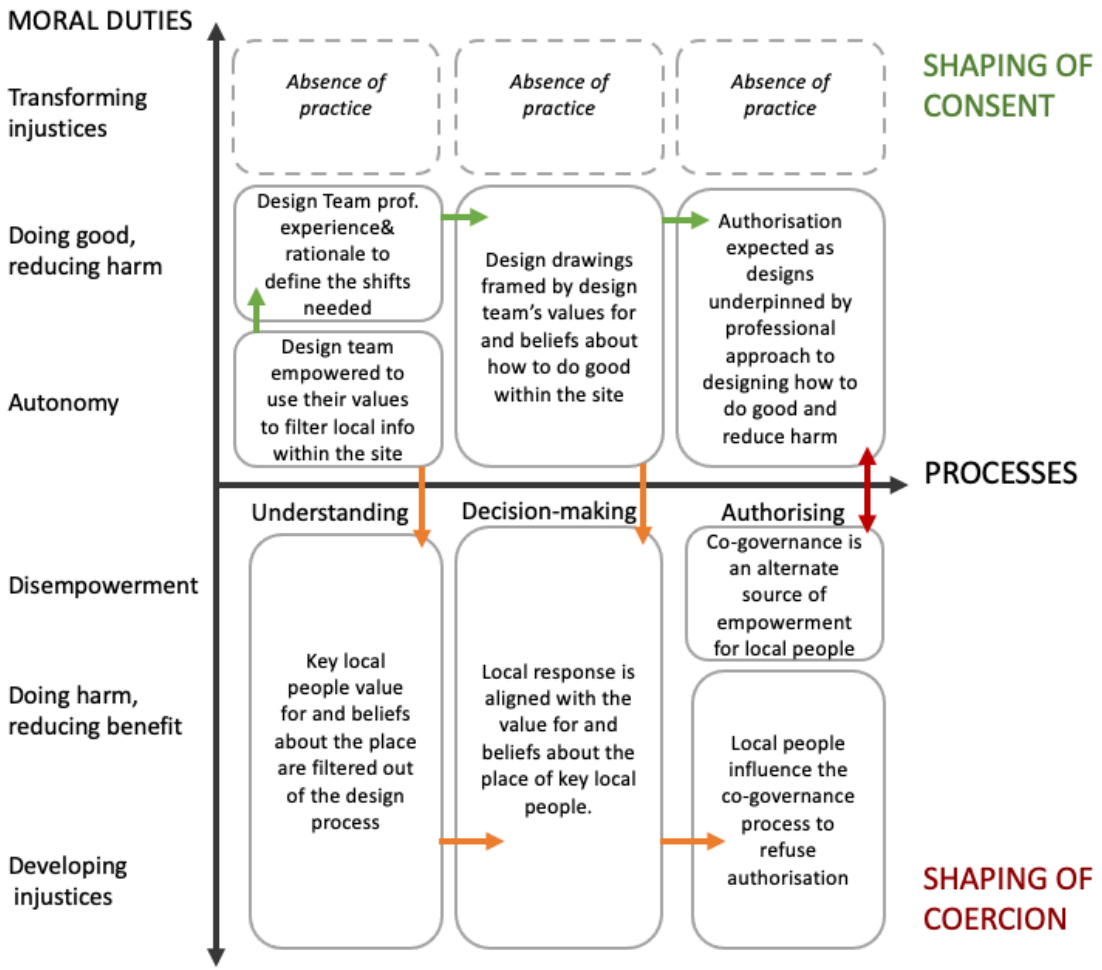

Figure 4.24: Case Study 1, Aro Valley, interpreted using The Framework of Informed Consent

Figure 4.24 reveals two distinct sets of processes that shaped informed consent for this spatial change project. The first process (green arrows, top half) shows how the participatory design process was empowered by *professional design* autonomy and focused on determining how to develop the design drawings. The second process (red arrows, bottom half) took place in the local community, where a number of individuals had become empowered to exercise *their* local autonomy. This empowerment came about by others in the local community recognising and valuing experiences these individuals had as mothers or heritage stewards and local welfare activists. These individuals recognised key opportunities to negotiate a better equity for particular people and things through the upcoming spatial change process. This led them to actively engage in the pre-design participatory process. Consequently, the people who had these experiences were the ones whose autonomy was empowered by the priorities produced

during that participatory process. These priorities were tested more widely, with local people, and found to be resonant.

During the participatory design process itself, their roles were recognised and amplified by their peers in the community, who respected their experiences as important to re-balancing justice in this place. They became de facto stewards of the landscape elements that have meaning for them, for instance the pinch point, the two gum trees or the bunker. These local stewards focused on their local ways of valuing the place and their beliefs about its future ability to deliver greater local social welfare. However, these local values and their potential for local good were side-lined by the professional design team, who wanted feedback constrained within the workshops and methods they introduced. Their expectation was that this would mean that all local people were given the same opportunity to contribute before the design team filtered the information using their own values and beliefs. The local steward's ways of valuing the place and their beliefs about how to develop the place were subsequently absent in the drawn designs, which led to other local people on the co-governance group, saying 'no' during the process of authorisation.

It is notable that this diagram (Figure 4.24) showing a Framework of Informed Consent identifies two sets of processes. This shifts the sole interpretative focus from the normative design team as key informants and so responds to a key critique of extant scholarship in Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework – the assumption of finite source of empowerment. To illustrate the contrast, if this Case Study took a singular focus on the design perspective, then problems with the design would have been explained as due to; local plan illiteracy, distortion by difficult or loud voices and local people misunderstanding or avoiding constraints. In the Theoretical Framework, this study identified a similar argument, which led to a preoccupation within the scholarship on how methods can empower local people within the design process (De La Pena et al., 2017; Sanoff, 1984; Till, 2005).

This diagram helps to explain three key findings from the Aro Valley Site Development Case Study about how problems developed in the participatory design process:

1. The co-existence of three different participatory practices (pre-design participatory process, participatory design and co-governance group) resulted in an unforeseen consequence; local co-governance group members were empowered by other local people during the pre-design participatory process to give a clear 'no' to the design drawings, but there was no process that empowered them to develop a 'yes'.

2. The participatory design process itself primarily empowered the design team's autonomy to do good in this place. This was based on their own way of valuing the place and believing in how they could do good but did not negotiate greater equity with or for local people.

3. The participatory design process limited the 'site' of participation within the spatially defined 'site' of design. The 'site' of participation differed from local people's relationship to their place and so existing local autonomy was not empowered by that participatory design process.

The following paragraphs will now examine each of the key findings, and their implications for participatory design practice.

Finding 1: The co-existence of three different participatory practices (pre-design participatory process, participatory design and co-governance group) resulted in an unforeseen consequence; local co-governance group members were empowered by other local people during the pre-design participatory process to give a clear 'no' to the design drawings, but there was no process that empowered them to develop a 'yes'.

This insight acknowledges the two sets of existing autonomies that were empowered to shape consent through three participatory processes. The first autonomy is the design team's autonomy. This was formed at a national scale via professional qualifications and experience. It was defined here by their professional contract with the city council and via municipal policies (e.g., municipal heritage regulations). The second autonomy is that of certain groups of local people. They were recognised and supported by their peers to act as advocates or

stewards of local experiences and concerns. This autonomy was derived from past collective experiences in the place, which built their knowledge of place and their value for it. The contractual client, the municipality, aligned themselves with this group, via the co-governance group. This group were therefore empowered as the consenter, a role not expected by the design team or factored into the participatory design process.

Through the lens of consent, it was possible to follow the different ways in which these two autonomies were empowered to influence the participatory design process. Three participatory practices were significant; the participatory workshops prior to design that determined the key local priorities for the place (pre-design participatory process), the workshops and interviews to gather local perspectives (participatory design process), and the stewardship of local perspectives (the work of the co-governance group).

The key local priorities were used by the co-governance group as a guide to consider whether the designs developed greater local equity and included the co-governance group maintaining contact with these local stewards who had a deep understanding of each priority. This was an informal practice, observed in the field through participant observations and key informant interviews. This approach became more pronounced when the local co-governance group members recognised the participatory design process was not producing designs which reflected the local priorities for how to negotiate justice here.

In parallel, the design team recognise a separate participatory design process that did not take recognise of the earlier priority setting process, as using the priorities as a guide and constraint on their designs did not fit with their overall approach to the project. The aim of the design team's process was to develop their understanding of the site in order to support their own design decision-making, and in particular how their drawn designs could redefine good and reduce harm, as the design team understood them. These decisions were then communicated to local people in the design drawings. The local response was that the drawn designs did not reflect the key local priorities and the co-governance group did not recognise the ongoing development of the designs. However, the design team believed the designs were well informed and rational. As a result, the design team were not prepared to make substantive changes to their design proposals.

Therefore, in the Aro Valley case the co-existence of different participatory processes resulted in a conflict between autonomies that led to unforeseen consequences. The designers considered that their autonomy was empowered to define an understanding of this place and develop decisions about how to do good and reduce harm. Local people were empowered to develop an understanding of their key priorities about how to re-negotiate equity. But this local understanding did not guide the professionally designed decisions. So local autonomy was not empowered to design a 'yes' and instead was limited to saying 'no': to not authorising the design drawings.

The intersection between the multi-valent participatory processes and their primary actors, is key to understanding how consent became limited in this case. A clear difference between the participatory *design* process, and the other two participatory processes (priority setting and local co-governance) was that the participatory design process was configured to primarily empower the designers' autonomy, not that of local people. This feature was contrary to the local expectations of a participatory process and local people reported their confusion and unease in terms of the design drawings having a lack of "Aro-ness". This approach is contrary to the proposition underscoring the scholarship influenced by Arnstein (1969), that justice is developed by putting local perspective first.

As the public sector adopts participatory processes more widely, this intersection would merit further research. In particular how can different participatory processes co-exist whilst delivering their different benefits? This study set out to develop thinking at this intersection between professional and local people – and their wider processes – by introducing informed consent. Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, explained how in many disciplines informed consent acts as a higher-order methodology, supporting professionals to guide the interface of multiple different processes. This study has crystallised how informed consent centres neither the professional designer nor the local person, but the *interaction* between them. This normative, (but rigorously nuanced through interdisciplinary field research) interaction of informed consent has a particular 'grammar' (Kleinig, 2010). This grammar defines the co-dependent roles of professional and lay person in developing justice. The utility of this grammar in light of this field research, will be furthered considered in the Discussion Chapter.

Finding 2: The participatory design process primarily empowered the design team's autonomy to do good in this place. This was based on their own way of valuing the place and believing in how it could do good. However, it did not negotiate greater equity with and for local people.

How the design team understood their professional expertise had a significant impact on the role they took on within the participatory design process. The design professionals understood that their primary skill or expertise was to synthesise information about the place in which the design site was located, and to then integrate this information with their own professional experiences of the types of spatial decisions that would do good for this place. This understanding of design expertise is well rehearsed in the participatory design literature (Hoddinott et al., 2019; Rowe, 1987; Till, 2005), indicating that the higher order methodology is design, not participation.

An example from this Case Study is the way the design team developed design decisions related to the pinch point. The design team developed their understanding and framed the pinch point as a problem about how to cycle here, with better sightlines and a notional reduction in speed. The design team then synthesised the edits to this 'site' through focused understanding with mobility precedents from elsewhere to design a solution. In contrast, local priorities and the local stewards framed the pinch point as an opportunity to empower the autonomy of small children and their caregivers, to walk freely out of the play park and around the park. Unlike the design team they were not able to synthesise an alternative. But the local framing would have led a design team to different precedents and so a different drawn design.

The findings highlight that there were two implicit understandings of the place. One was inscribed in the decisions drawn in the design plans by the design team and later as a rational defence for the design drawings. The second, the local understanding, constrained how those decisions were read by local people. This led to local people having concerns about the proposed design outcomes and not authorising the drawn design plans. The episodes show that when the understandings diverged, there was a negative impact on both the design team and the local people. In this case, the most vital divergence was about what landscape elements were given primary attention in the development of design decisions. This raises a possibility, that Arnstein's principle of local primacy should be understood as putting the relationship between local people and their place first – not simply local people leading.

Overall, the episodes showed how the design team paid primary attention to doing good by improving the community centre building and then addressed secondary concerns, such as mobility around it. Whereas the local stewards centred on meaningful landscape elements, such as the pinch point, the gum trees and the bunker.

This insight raises a question about how the professional design team's material and abductive processes appear to have limited informed consent. As explored in the description of episodes in the Findings Chapter, the development of decisions about how to do good and reduce harm was undertaken both by individual designers and through a discursive peer process with other designers. In this peer process, individual designer's developed drawn designs are then subject to robust debate by colleagues. In this Case Study, this debate took place in their own office space and this type of process and the creative experience it offers was a key motivation for the designers in their decision to become designers.

The published scholarship on the design process presents two arguments that this study helps to reconcile – first an ideal that the design team work closely with local people (Hoddinott et al., 2019; Sanoff, 2014). The second notes that most professionals also need space to synthesise and work abductively on their own and with their peers (Beauregard, 2015; Till, 2005). Case Study 1, Aro Valley, reveals that as participatory design is becoming institutionalised, there are pragmatic questions about whether and how design professionals, working within the ideal procession of the design stages and within the constraints of a public sector budget, can also allocate time to become deeply embedded in a place. This is a concern examined in the Theoretical Framework (Calderon, 2013, 2019; Flyvberg, 1998). The detailed interpretation, supported by the concept of informed consent, indicates a third possibility – that if the intention is to form local consent, then there are certain processes and duties within the development of designs that design professionals need to align with local people. This case raises a number of ways that this alignment could be achieved, including the local understanding of which landscape elements need primary attention needs to be foregrounded in the development of design drawings, that design drawings need to be from the perspective and position of particular groups (e.g., mothers), that concerns such as heritage and memory need to be negotiated at multiple scales (such as municipal and neighbourhood), and that the definition of the site needs to reflect the experiences of key stakeholders (local and municipal).

In contrast, the Aro Valley Case Study revealed that when local values and beliefs about a place did not frame the professional understanding that guides the design, then the consequential lack of local consent later limits the development of the drawn designs. This situation is not dissimilar to that faced by professionals in other social welfare disciplines who work within comparable constraints of time, resource and professional processes which enable those constraints to be met. As noted in Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, these disciplines add an additional methodological lens to their practice, that of informed consent. Informed consent, whilst it is not always easy or clear cut, provides a vehicle for professionals to operationalise the consenters' (here this is local people) values and beliefs within the development of decisions, and more widely to enable consent to be formed. The literature on informed consent does not address material objects, but it is notable that the crux of this case is what objects within a place local people place value upon and are attached to and how local people are centred, via those objects, in the design process.

Finding 3: The participatory design process limited the 'site' of participation within the spatially defined 'site' of design. The 'site' of participation differed from local people's relationship to their place, and so existing local autonomy was not empowered by that participatory design process.

The empirical findings from the Aro Valley Site Development case raise an intriguing possibility – that this example of participation in spatial design is not spatial participation in design *per se*. In this case, 'participation' involved designers asking local people to identify discrete problems and priorities (e.g., identifying discrete objects, such as the pinch point and the bunker), that the local people wanted their relationship with changed. These things were discrete sites for participation, that contrast with the wider spatial site of design. The previous insight showed how the 'place' as experienced by the local community, gave primary concern to a different concern and indeed prioritised different objects.

'Participatory' procedures had unforeseen consequences, due to this dissonance between local place and site. This included the design team presenting local people with site plans. These site plans defined an area of land that the design team were empowered (by their

contract with the municipal client) to change. When problems arose, the design team assumed they were due to deficiencies in local people (e.g., local plan illiteracy, distortion by difficult or loud voices and local people misunderstanding or unrealistic avoidance of constraints), rather than differences between the local place and site. This study identifies the limitations of this approach, not only to relationships with local people but also to the understanding that underpins the design team. To be explicit, the client for these designs explicitly stated that local relationship to place was key to a good design, but this Case Study has shown some of the limitations to design practice in relating to, or negotiating with, that local relationship to place.

The result of these normative design practices in this place saw the use of site plans coerced out of the discussion about the local ways of valuing and understanding this place. This value was locally understood and so easefully communicated via objects that lay outside the boundaries of the site plan (e.g., the gum trees). In addition, the methods used to gather local understanding, for example to pinpoint discrete changes that locals might agree were needed on the site, resulted in object based, rather than space-based participation. This led to multiple, competing sites of participation. A side product of this, when considered along with the previous insight on the way the Aro participatory design process centred design autonomy, was that it led to the design team arbitrating what priority these different objects should be given. Absent from this is the existing social and spatial meaning of landscape objects to local people, such as how and what attachment local people have formed and sustained to different objects, and then to the sense or meaning of the place that accumulates through these objects. They then used their spatial and technical lenses to filter these priorities and develop the understanding of them that informed their design decisions, with the result that design autonomy can be said, in this Case Study, to be the primary autonomy empowered to influence spatial decision-making.

The design team's spatial lens (upon their defined site and objects within it) then limited the wider design development process. An understanding of what locals knew about space in this place was notably absent from the 'sites for participation'. This excluded local understandings of identities, attachments and spatial relationships between things, and between things and people. This in turn limited the design team's ability to consider the individual and culminative spatial changes from a local perspective and to ensure the changes they proposed for the place enabled its local social aims. Namely, that the drawn designs were easily understood by local

people as a representation of this place and therefore consent to the drawn designs was a social contract for its future. The episodes reveal how the use of such fragmented sites of participation contributed to authorisation being withheld.

This withholding of consent was not predicted by the design team. In fact, the local 'no' appeared to the design team to be an irrational and unreasonable reaction to the drawn designs. They supposed the 'no' was a product of the local co-governance members being coerced by those acting as de facto stewards for key objects. But the evidence is that local people did not feel coerced. They described their frustration lying with the place depicted in the drawn designs. It is worth noting that this standoff harmed the chances of moving the design development forward within the project's constraints and also contributed to the harm and frustration experienced by the design team and local people. This insight therefore provides a new perspective on the scholarship from a designer's perspective which is included in Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, that characterised local people as frustrated, ill-informed, or fatigued (Arnstein, 1972; Richardson & Connelly, 2005; Till, 2005). The theoretical framework also considered other case studies of landscapes where the design team disrupts a local relationship to place and causes unforeseen harm and disruption (Arler, F, 2008; Calderon, 2019; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Jones & Stenseke, 2011; Makhzoumi et al., 2011), indicating that this is currently, and remains, a consistent problem for design practice. This study shows, using the lens of informed consent, how site-based practices are used by a design team to construct their own definition of place, to inform the design development. But local people wanted practices that were led by the local relationship(s) to place.

The literature on informed consent focuses on how humans interact. It does not include concepts that consider how to notice the role of space in shaping consent. This is an interdisciplinary contribution that spatial disciplines can make, given their primary focus and expertise in considering the interactions between space, objects and people. This study signals two avenues which could contribute. Firstly, in terms of site practices that negotiate consent. For instance, Kahn and Burns provide a theoretical approach in their ground-breaking book 'Site Matters' (Burns & Kahn, 2021), that could help interpret the conflicting reactions in this Case Study. They dissect the relationship between design process and site into consideration of three areas: control, influence and effect:

> These three territories overlap despite their different geographies and temporalities. The area of control – most referred to in design discourse with the term site – describes the most limited field spatially and temporally. Forces within it predate design action. Lying outside direct design control, areas of influence and effect situate design actions in relation to wider professes, including the often-unpredictable change propelled by design intervention. All three areas exist squarely within the domain of design concerns. (Kahn and Burns, 2021, p. 20)

From this study we can extrapolate that local understanding of these 'territories' diverged from the understanding of the design team, which disrupted the possibility of mutual understanding and agreement on the shared site where consent was needed. Kahn and Burn's (2021) work helps us to understand how design practice could approach articulating the different relationships to space and objects to better shape informed consent.

The second avenue is how professionals can relate concerns about equity and justice to this site – or place. To recap, the theoretical framework referred to numerous case studies of landscapes where the arrival of professional design practices disrupts the local relationship to place and causes unforeseen harm and disruption, and indeed injustice to local people indicating that this is and remains a consistent problem for design practice. However, in the Theoretical Framework it was noted that there are examples of participatory design processes and design practice that appear to successfully centre the local relationship to place and so address these concerns (Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Griffin et al., 2020). Whilst the literature treats these as niche practices for acute social concerns, such as indigeneity, armed conflicts, or race, it is notable the practices accommodate dissonance and enable negotiation between heterogeneity, including between local people and design team, rather than introducing designers' definitions of how to do good here. Given the heterogeneity of our cities and the known inequities within our design work forces, it would be fair to propose that these practices ought to be part of the mainstream designer's toolkit – if we aim to shape informed consent better.

The confluence of these two avenues, with a Framework of Informed Consent, signals an opportunity to operationalise in design concerns about spatial justice and democracy.

4.4 Questions raised by Case 1, Aro Valley: for practice and applied research

This section identifies specific applied concerns raised by each episode, about site practices (as the process of inquiry) and design practices (to *signify* the *course of action*). These concerns are pivoted into questions (Table 4.1) to prepare for the subsequent Chapters which examine the implications of and conclusions from both case studies. Overall, these questions propose broader questions about how to ground our site practices (as the process of enquiry) and design drawings (as defining the course of action) in the local relationship to place.

Table 4.1: Questions raised by Case Study 1: Aro Valley for practice and research

Controversial site practice in the Case Study	Questions raised for future sites/places
Case 1, Aro Valley	
Episode 1: Two Gum Trees The boundaries of the site were not the same as the boundaries of the local place, meaning that the site did not capture the local relationship to place Meaningful landscape elements (two gum trees) are on areas adjacent to the site. These landscape elements are drawn in standardised and partial ways. The drawing does not capture the local relationship to the landscape elements, or contribution to the local relationship to place. In addition, local people are aware of examples of damage, during construction, to adjacent sites/access ways.	• How do site practices deal with the meaning and resonance of a wider place? • How is the place depicted in a way that resonates with local people? • How can site practices treasure precious landscape elements in the local place? This would sustain the landscape elements, take account of the meaning they contribute to the site, and reassure local people of designers' care? • How can site practices identify specific elements which need bespoke drawing, rather than, for instance, a standard design template of a tree canopy. • Is there local language for the local sense of place (e.g., Aro-ness): if not, can words be developed so this is an explicit discussion?
Episode 2: The Pinch Point Highly valued landscape elements (the play park) are within the local place but are adjacent to the site. They are given secondary consideration in resolving a problem (the pinch point) on the site.	• How do site practices account for the interactions within the place, rather than give primacy to the interactions situated within the site? • How can drawings depict the adjacent areas to the site, in a way that signifies the local relationship to them?

Episode 3: The Bunker/The Pavilion Site practices did not adequately uncover how local people valued a heritage landscape element. Instead, they simply adopted the meaning formed by formal institutional systems (e.g., heritage registers).	• How can site practices consider diverse heritage values? • How can site practices explore vulnerable landscape elements as made of an unstable constellation of constituent parts, rather than as a stable object? • How can design drawings depict the local value for these treasured elements?

Chapter 5: Findings: Case Study 2: Grønne Park, Superkilen

Case Study 2, Grønne Park, Superkilen, Copenhagen, starts with the origin story of the case and then addresses four landscape elements that have been changed since the landscape opened to the public. Each episode is named after the landscape element it examines; The White Wall, The Fence, The Slope and The Intersection. Changes to these landscape elements have resulted in the place deviating from its intended initial social aims, as described in the client's brief for the participatory design process. Each set of changes is again led by a particular person or group: an artist group, øldrikkers (men who gather and drink beer in public places), a gardener, and the design team working on the adjacent site of Mjølnerparken. The episodes in Case Study 2 follow a similar story line approach to Case Study 1: The changes to the landscape element are introduced; then, *what* processes and practices have changed it and in *what* ways the participatory design process influenced those processes and practices are considered. Finally, an examination, through the lens of consent, identifies findings about *why* this participatory design process has resulted in unplanned place changes.

5.1 Origin Story

This section outlines the spatial, social and policy context in which Den Grønne Park, Superkilen was both designed, and has existed since opening. It emphasises the immanent concerns of that place, in particular the relationship between local people and their place.

Superkilen lies close to the northern boundary of the district of Nørrebro in Copenhagen, Denmark (Figure 5.1). Superkilen can be translated as 'super wedge', with 'kile' normally referring to green wedges and was opened in 2012. The use of 'super' indicates that this natural green 'kile' is being improved. Den Grønne Park (Green Park) is one of the three areas which make up the public place called Superkilen. The other two are Den Røde Plads (The Red Square) and Den Sorte Plads (The Black Square) (Figure 5.2). Prior to its development as Superkilen, it had no name – and was underdeveloped land left over after the re-development of adjacent sites.

5.1.1 Location

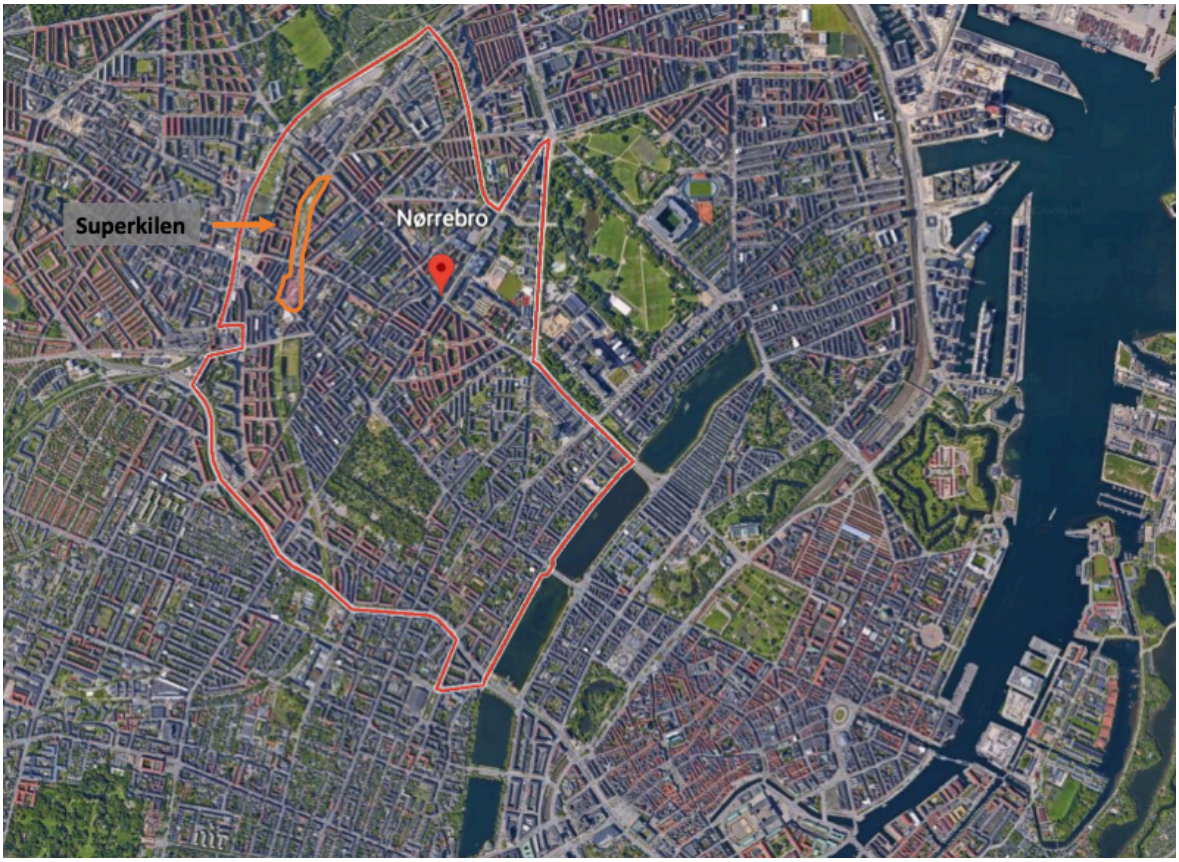

Figure 5.1 Location of Case: Superkilen in Nørrebro, København / Copenhagen, Denmark (Image: Google Maps 2022, orientated North). Nørrebro is 3.82km², and Superkilen is 0.027km²

Grønne Park is surrounded by four distinct places: Tagensvej, a main arterial road running between residential suburbs and central Copenhagen; the back of privately owned residential and office spaces on Heimdalsgade; Sorte Plads and lastly, Mjølnerparken – four blocks of social housing run by Bo-Vita (previously known as Lejerbo), see Figure 5.2. On the far side of Mjølnerparken, between the housing and the train line, is another public park – Mimersparken, also opened in 2012).

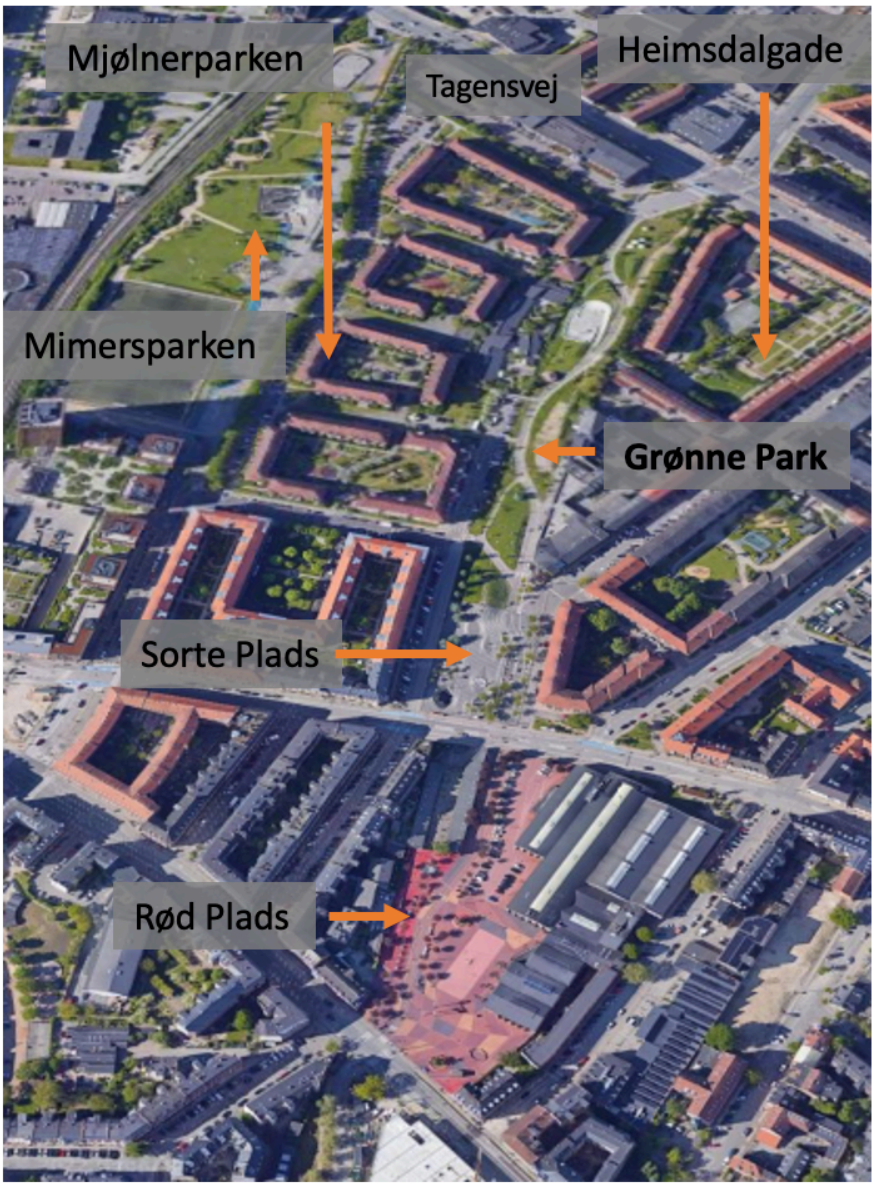

Figure 5.2 Location of Case: Superkilen Public Park: showing its three parts: Rød Plads, Sorte Plads and the Grønne Park and other main features in this case. (Google Earth 29/03/22, Author's own annotations)

5.1.2 Spatial History

From the 1920s to the 1980s, Grønne Park's site was the site of small-scale industrial workshops (see Figures 5.3a and 5.3b). Grønne Park was bordered by Tagensvej, Heimdalsgade housing and factories, the tram facilities (on what is Den Sorte Plads) and a Paper Factory on the site of what is now Mjølnerparken. The other side of the Paper Factory backed onto railyards and a rail line – now Mimersparken – has replaced those railyards and backs onto the same rail lines.

Image removed for copyright compliance

Figure 5.3a (top): Aerial of area prior to Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park (Copenhagen City Archive, 1954)
Figure 5.3b (bottom): Aerial of area prior to Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park (Copenhagen Museum, 1949)

By the 1980s, the Paper Factory closed. It was replaced with four large blocks of social housing, named Mjølnerparken. The site of Grønne Park was cleared of industrial units during the development of Mjølnerparken. It remained an underdeveloped site for the next 30 years, with adventive species and grass covering its surface (Lejerbo Housing Association, 2017).

Interviews and a detailed inspection of archival photographs showed that during the 1990s some changes were made to the site of Grønne Park, including a pedestrian path and separate cycle paths running through its length. A mound was also added at the Tagensvej end, to reduce road noise – to make it a more pleasant green space (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019; 2Loc2, personal communication, 16 January 2019). This inspection also showed that after Mjølnerparken opened, fencing was added along the Heimdalsgade boundary, removing access across the landscape (Det KGL. Bibliotek, 2018). There was also a passage under the train tracks from the railyard, reducing the isolation of the Mjølnerparken site; it is not clear when this was removed but from the review of archival photographs it also appears to be after Mjølnerparken was built.

5.1.3 Social History

Copenhagen

Copenhagen is the capital of the social democratic, Nordic nation of Denmark. Copenhagen is the most populous city in Denmark by a factor of five, and accounts for over 40% of Danish GDP (OECD n.d.). In recent years, Copenhagen has come to global attention for its design-led approach to urban development and sustainability and as "the best city in the world for cyclists" (co-creation policy). However, alongside this there has been a parallel concern about Denmark's ability to extend the benefits of its social democracy to non-Western immigrants, and so maintain the nation's reputation for social justice (Stender & Bech Danielsen, 2019; Hussain, 2014)

Nørrebro

Nørrebro is one of ten districts in Copenhagen. In 1852, the boundaries of Copenhagen expanded, which led to Nørrebro's creation as the added land was converted from agriculture to housing and industrial uses. Nørrebro became, and for many years remained, an area that workers moved into when they arrived in Copenhagen. This has included a succession of immigrant groups.

Nørrebro's history has been characterised by social and political activism, including protests and riots that have had a significant impact on both State and Municipal Policy (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019; Rutt & Loveless, 2018). Recently, this has included Copenhagen Municipality's "Co-Creation Policy" which sets out an approach that is responsive to citizens' motivations to engage with their city. The Co-Creation Policy describes how this approach "will require a radical rethink of the nature of urban development. The process must be less controlled – it must unleash Copenhageners' creativity so that everybody works together to build the city we want" (Københavns Kommune, 2015).

Due to Copenhagen's success at building a liveable city, there has been a recent influx of middle-income families seeking affordable, good quality housing in the centre of Copenhagen and Nørrebro is now understood by local people as undergoing gentrification (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019; 2Loc2, personal communication, 16 January 2019; 2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019; 2Mun2/3, personal communication, 14 March 2019).

Nordvest (Bispebjerg District)

Mjølnerparken lies along the boundary of Nørrebro and Nordvest, which is officially called the Bispbjerg District. Nordvest's history is distinct to Nørrebro. Founded at the beginning of the 20th Century, it has always included a high proportion of social housing. The social housing was occupied by workers, who from the 1920s had moved from central Copenhagen to seek higher health and hygiene standards on these social housing estates. These workers often added their own small-scale workshops or industrial units in between housing, like those seen on the site of Grønne Park. Since the 1980s, Nordvest has been increasingly characterised by apartments. There have also been concerns about social problems and the amount of low-level crime. These are considered to be a result of a policy of housing people with acute mental ill-health together in this area. From the 1990s, there has been increasing efforts by the Danish state to regenerate the area (Kirkeby, 1999).

Mjølnerparken

Mjølnerparken's profile has also grown since the 1990s – becoming a focal point for local, national, and international debates about social integration of non-western immigrants and their descendants (O'Sullivan, 2020). Mjølnerparken is also a key feature in Danish debates, becoming central to discussions on migration and housing, education, employment and terrorism. It has been mentioned in reports about violent attacks in Copenhagen, triggered by discussion of cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad (counter to the Islamic tradition of aniconism).

Shifting Danish governments have, since 2010, formally defined a list of housing areas which it defines as 'ghettos', under their controversial Ghetto Policy (Nielsen, 2019). The Ghetto Policy, 2010-19, defined these housing areas as 'ghettos' according to a range of socio-economic criteria. Mjølnerparken was consistently defined as a 'ghetto' due to high levels of residents who are non-western migrants and their descendants, are unemployed or have low incomes, and only achieving a primary education within the Danish system. However, it is notable that Mjølnerparken has not reached the threshold of another ghetto criteria; criminal convictions of residents. The state has certain powers over 'ghetto' residents and their housing. For instance, 'ghetto' residents are required to participate in social and education programmes or they can be evicted, their housing demolished and redeveloped for private occupation. There has been considerable debate and concern about this approach, that it results in the dispersal of immigrants with high needs away from their extended families, social services and schools. These immigrants often end up in housing further away from their workplaces in the city centre and their housing is then occupied by 'ethnically Danish' families, a Danish term to describe Danish people who are of Danish descent. As such, some commentators have noted the Ghetto Policy can exasperate social inequity and drive gentrification (Nielsen, 2019).

Redevelopment and Renewal

In 2005, Copenhagen Municipality worked with local people to set out its vision for the renewal of the Mimersgade Quarter, the area bounded by Tagensvej, Jagtvej, Nørrebrogade and the S-togslinie (S-trainline) to the northwest. The development of the vision, criteria and selection of projects included local people in consensus-building workshops, and there was also

neighbourhood board representative on the steering group. The local people developed a vision which was to be achieved through several strategies, which on a tactical level were to be delivered by 120 different co-selected urban development projects.

The vision document included one reference to a specific place within Mimersgade Quarter; Mjølnerparken, identifying how it would be different and was therefore key to the wider renewal, "we must see Mjølnerparken as positive … we find ourselves asking: shall we live or visit there? As when different cultures meet, new cultures can rise! So, we need to develop new types of communities by exploring what we can do together, it can be business, music, environmental etc" (Københavns Kommune, 2005, p. 6).

Later in the document, this thinking is further explained:

> In short, it's about the reversal of the negative image and reputation of the Mimersgade district, in particular Mjølnerparken. This form of negative stigma has an inward effect on especially recent migrants housed in the area, as they experience it as a form of racism, which in turn can be a contributing factor to some losing desire and incentive for participation in the labour market and in local leisure, cultural and association life. (Københavns Kommune, 2005, p. 36).

This thinking was translated into a specific strategy for Mjølnerparken, "with the opening of Mjølnerparken, a better connection will be created with the rest of the district. The interaction between residents of the building and other residents of the area must be strengthened" (Københavns Kommune, 2005, p. 14).

This aim of 'opening Mjølnerparken' informed the development of a number of projects, including open air youth exercise facilities in and around Mjølnerparken. These were to be open to young people from across the area. Also, the beautification and extension of existing cycleways to include routes that connected residents of Mjølnerparken to the wider network.

Separately to this work done in collaboration with local people, there was a partnership between Copenhagen Municipality and Realdania, the Danish philanthropic urban development organisation (Københavns Kommune, 2005). The goal of the partnership project within Mimersgade Renewal was that:

> With an architectural boost, the goal has been to give the neighbourhood around Mimersgade on Nørrebro in Copenhagen a new and more positive identity – for the benefit of those who live in the area. The locals must be proud to live in the Mimersgade district, and the district must be a place that entices people from outside to stop by and use the area's attractions. The physical improvements must support cohesion and promote integration in the district, they must provide for social and cultural activities, and they must attract new investment in business and housing improvements. (Realdania, 2004)

In partnership with Realdania, Copenhagen Municipality identified three strategic, "lighthouse" projects to catalyse wider change: Superkilen, Nørrebrohallen (a sports centre) and Mimersparken. This was done without citizen involvement, although a local representative from the area renewal process was included on the "lighthouse" projects' steering group.

The process for developing Superkilen was distinct to the wider programme and local people understood they had less influence. This became problematic and was publicly challenged by local people in the media and during workshops that brought together local people, the design team and municipality – these types of workshops commonly form part of urban change programmes in Copenhagen. One high profile problem was the selection process that led to the appointment of the consortium of BIG Architects, Topotek 1, and Superflex. The heart of this problem was understood to be that local people had recognised the need for increased high-quality green space in the area, which was not a core feature of Superkilen. The local representative on the selection committee did not support the proposal because of its lack of green space. However, the investment by Realdania meant local people could not change the decision to select this team.

5.1.4 Superkilen when opened – awards and images.

Superkilen opened during 2011-2012, to critical acclaim from the design sector. Awards included an AIA Honour Award and Aga Kahn Award and it was shortlisted for Design of the Year by Design Museum in London, as well as the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture.

Superkilen has also been the subject of a high number of academic studies and essays, for example: Beltran Rodriguez & Simon, 2015; Daly, 2019; Hertlein, 2008 ; Stanfield & Riemsdijk, 2019; Stender & Bech-Danielsen, 2019; Stickells, 2016. Images of the Red and Black Squares are widely used in Copenhagen's tourist literature and media, identifying it as a top visitor attraction. It is also a popular place for Instagram shots, music videos and marketing images. However, in more recent years several studies have started to consider its social impact and these are more nuanced, and indeed critical of its impact on the primary group it set out to serve – the residents' of Mjølnerparken (Stender & Bech-Danielsen, 2019).

5.2 Episodes

This section presents findings on four episodes, showing where the form and use of the constructed landscape has deviated from its designed intent. These deviations reveal how participatory design did and didn't shape informed consent and examine the implications for achieving the design brief – to develop the social and spatial equity of Mjølnerparken residents. The episodes are focused on, 'The White Wall', 'The Slope', 'The Fence' and 'The Intersection'.

5.2.1 Episode 1: The White Wall

This episode explores how consent shaped during the participatory design process influences the subsequent interactions between local actors, human and non-human, on the landscape. The episode first introduces the 'Lege' (play) area of Grønne Park and then considers design and management interactions that have shaped the area. Differences between these two sets of interactions reveal how participatory design both limits and enables consent.

The design team intended this play area of Grønne Park to be a place where the young men of Mjølnerparken could physically challenge themselves on the equipment and graffiti on a wall, whilst being visible, prominent and public on a high area next to the main cycleway.

Initial fieldwork identified this as an area that was not used as the design team expected. This episode explores the material response to the design team's material invitation (the white wall) for on-going autonomous art practices (e.g., graffiti), noting that it is not done by the young

men of Mjølnerparken. This episode shows how only some local people had the social autonomy to graffiti here and avoid police attention, by responding to a place with art, the place represents those people's culture.

5.2.1.1 How the design team intended the place to negotiate greater local equity

On the white wall is a street art piece, 'ZUSA' (Figure 5.4). The white wall is the back of an office building on Heimsdalgabe and was intended, by Superkilen's design team, as an invitation for autonomous arts practices: "I know that there has been constantly graffitied walls…it's interesting because in the very beginning of the project, this was actually one of the things that we actually would have liked to have encouraged" (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). This intent to encourage autonomous arts practices was not shown in their presentations, due to opposition from local people, voiced during the participatory workshops as they "didn't want to encourage graffiti" (personal communication, 5 March 2019). The design team were repeatedly dismissive of this local user group's input, considering them unrepresentative of the diversity in this area that was key to the project's brief (2KI8, personal communication, 19 January 2019, p. 8; 2KI12, personal communication, 5 March 2019, p. 2).

Figure 5.4: The Whitewall with ZUSA Artwork, amongst other artworks (Images: Author's Own 07/18, 11/18, 02/19, 02/19)

5.2.1.2 How the designed place did develop local equity

ZUSA's work was developed with a clear intent to change people's relationship to this place. The 'paste-up' is an artwork by Copenhagen Street artist, ZUSA. ZUSA is from the German: 'zusammen', meaning 'together'. ZUSA explained, during an interview, that he established his street art practice in the 1980s, after attending art school in Copenhagen and that he is based in another suburb of Copenhagen, some distance from Superkilen. He has sited his artworks across Copenhagen, as part of an "on-going outdoor campaign". He understands that children on the move play "spot the ZUSA". ZUSA mentions that "this one is unusual because it's not on a road" but the "bike transportation is key", as the work is visible from the major cycle route, Nørrebroruten (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). This route transects Superkilen and forms part of Copenhagen's major cycle arteries: The Nørrebroruten and Den Grønne Sti. ZUSA's decision to site an artwork here was not aligned with the design team's intention to invite the young men of Mjølnerparken to be part of the social contract of this space. Instead, ZUSA has attempted to create a closer relationship between this place and families driving or cycling around Copenhagen (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). It does not visually connect to Mjølnerparken (Figure 5.5.)

Figure 5.5 View from Mjølnerparken car park, across cycleway and 'lege' (play) areas to The Whitewall (Photos by Author, Apr 2019)

How this local autonomy decided to do good here

Formally this ‘paste-up’ responds to ZUSA’s understanding of what he considers interesting about this site, in particular an existing artwork on the white wall: “it was an Italian guy. I can’t recall his name. But he, he did some drawings. And they were very special. And I think I thought I try to take the inspiration….to make sense (of the Italian artwork) in the environment.” ZUSA described the Italian artist’s work, it “looks like a creature from the lagoon. So, that was what inspired us to do the horror theme” (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019) (Figure 5.6). In this way the work is site-specific, underscored by his interpretation of the context and his cultural references. However, the design team’s intention, to empower the culture of the young men of Mjølnerparken in a public space, is absent from ZUSA’s practice.

Figure 5.6: Remnant of line drawing of a black tentacle from the drawing (now obscured) that inspired the ZUSA tag (Authors own 04/19)

ZUSA was aware of the work being close to Mjølnerparken, and explicitly considered how he could do good, or be beneficent, in that context. ZUSA describes how Superkilen intends to be “multi-cultural…because of the people around here” (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). He describes his response to what he knows about that multi-cultural population, particularly those living in Mjølnerparken. The mint-green letters in the composition are straight from a B horror film, responding to the Italian lagoon monster. Behind the letters is an "action painting”, referencing the American artist, Jackson Pollock. ZUSA describes his work as “inspired by America” but “turned into Danish” (2Loc3, personal

communication, 29 September 2019). The action painting was going to be complimentary to the green – red, but they decided on pink because it's "gay and soft" (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). ZUSA and his team explained how this decision on how they could avoid causing local harm was underscored by their perception of Mjølnerparken. The design intent of Superkilen was to improve the wider perception of the area. Despite this, there continued to be widespread media about Mjølnerparken as a focus for gangs and terrorism perpetrated by non-Danish young men (Chrisafis, 2015). So ZUSA understood Mjølnerparken as home to young men that are associated with gangs and terrorism: "if you put up bloodstains on the wall, it's like it's too symbolic for them and they will love us, in some way, because it's a hot area" (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). This understanding of Mjølnerparken, as a place of violent, young black men, underscores this Danish artist's decisions on how to discharge the moral duty to not do harm, through the formal qualities of his artwork. ZUSA is concerned that if he explicitly references violence, that he will align himself with Mjølnerparken residents. He goes on to discuss how that would make him an "enemy of the state" that he aligns himself with and whose spatial justice he intends to constructively contribute. In this way, the artwork deliberately disassociates itself from Mjølnerparken's young men, albeit one actor's understanding of them (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). So, whilst ZUSA's practice was not in keeping with the design team's intent, it is reasonable to argue it was predictable that ZUSA would respond to the invitation of the white wall.

How this local autonomy influenced local equity

ZUSA's permanent artwork is in contrast to the ephemeral artwork which the design team sought to invite by the young men of Mjølnerparken. The ZUSA artwork was conceived from sketches made on site, then formal decisions about it were explored in ZUSA's studio, where it was also partially constructed. Then the 'paste-up' was installed on site with "very strong glue … we call it 'extreme glue'", his use of "extreme glue" asserts his self-determined right to authorise his own long-term presence. He also discusses this intent in the context of his other artworks, noting that if the paste-up is removed it retains a presence "because a wall was another colour so the ZUSA (was), like a negative." The artwork's placement (Figure 5.7) was also key to this objective: "I love that it's higher than anybody else can reach", untouched by

the “ongoing project for the guy who is removing graffiti” and because it’s a “paste-up”, you’d need “special tools with you to get it down” (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). ZUSA is bringing together a defined social intent, to shift who this place is for, with specific practices that support the artwork’s permanence. This artwork arrives, as the design team intended – in response to a white wall. Yet, it is counter to the intent of empowering the residents of Mjølnerparken to express their identity here.

Figure 5.7: Steep hill on which the ladders were placed. ZUSA tag is top centre (Photos by Author, Feb 2019)

ZUSA’s shift in the social contract of this place was supported by implicit social factors. ZUSA, and his self-proclaimed “vandals”, described the carefully planned installation, “Sunday is our good day…8am in the morning…not much traffic but still it is daylight, so it doesn’t look like it’s illegal…you look like a grown-up” (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). They had prepared an excuse, if challenged, “we are putting it up for a movie that’s going to be filmed on Monday.” But no one questioned them as they placed a borrowed painters’ ladder

on the back slope. They understood it was because “we are at least 45-year-old Danish guys … it’s a trick we use”. ZUSA’s arts practice responds directly to the conditions of their social autonomy. That autonomy is fuelled by their gender, age and race, and leads directly to his interpretation of what is good and what is just being present in this place. In addition, the team that support the artist ZUSA, are needed because he had to adapt his practice. ZUSA’s health means he uses a wheelchair and after he has created the work, he then directs the installation from on top of the slope. He explains this is an added deterrent to anyone challenging him – no one would think a man in a wheelchair would do this without permission. This prejudging of his autonomy works in his favour (2Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2019). So, whilst autonomous arts practice had been assumed by the design team, to be potent for those failed by institutionally framed opportunities, the interview with the artist shows how autonomous art practice here is instead an act of privilege, open only to those with the social autonomy of being older Danes. This wall does not disrupt spatial justice, to amplify or even include the young, black men of Mjølnerparken.

Figure 5.8: DYSO tag, and Danish/international works covering the ‘monster’ (Photos by Author, Apr 2019)

This interpretation is confirmed by a wider analysis of the marks on this wall. ZUSA and his team remark that many graffiti tags here are, like their own, from across Copenhagen, rather than being local to Superkilen. ZUSA understands that most are from wider Copenhagen artists, some are from tourists. For instance, the Italian artist's 'monster' has now been mostly covered by 'DYSO' (Figure 5.8): a tag ZUSA notes is also not native to this place, but is found across Copenhagen (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). In participant interviews, young Mjølnerparken residents did not recognise or know of residents working on this white wall (Fieldnotes, personal communication, 2019).

There is further evidence from the wider area, for which the white wall is a backdrop. The play and exercise equipment has been bombed with 'slaps' (a form of graffiti stickers) and marketing stickers (Figure 5.9). Analysis of these is congruent with the findings about the white wall. Most slaps and stickers are from wider Copenhagen. Some are international – from London, Germany, and Japan. They are from graffiti slap artists, but they are also from businesses: 'Mellow Boards' are e-skateboards from Germany, 'No Gravity' is an extreme movement training by Copenhagen-wide leisure groups, 'Urban Nerds', a London based youth marketing firm, and 'MMHRadio', a Copenhagen digital radio station for underground music. Fieldwork recorded that this area is used by young men, but from wider Copenhagen or by tourists. The young men of Mjølnerparken are not present (Fieldnotes 2018-19).

Figure 5.9 Examples of slaps and stickers on the play equipment (Images: Author's own 04/19)

In summary, this episode has explored how autonomy is discharged in an art project, and how consent is shaped through the framing of materials by specific social actors' understandings and practices. The work has not developed greater consent for a positive experience and profile for Mjølnerparken residents, as intended. Instead, it has provided opportunities for Danish citizens to frame and shift the spatial justice of this place in their favour.

5.2.1.3 Synopsis, with Consent

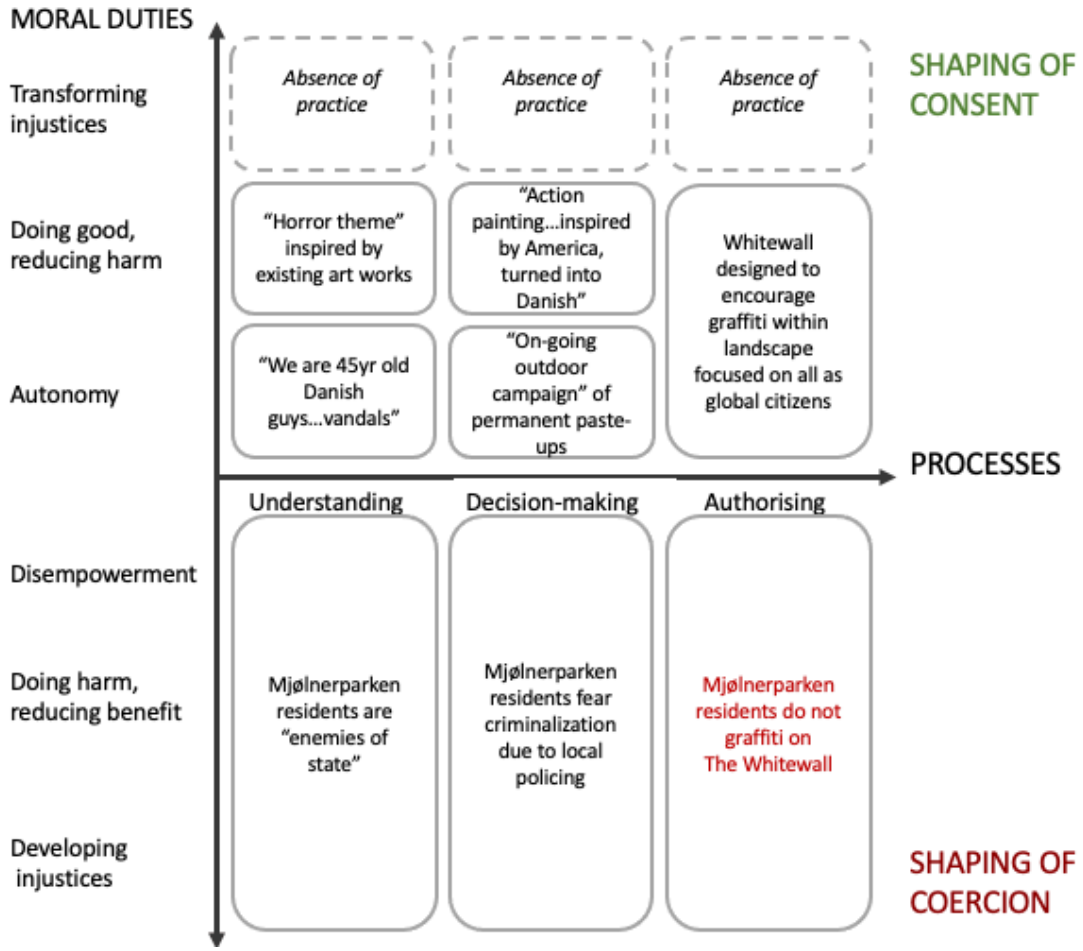

Figure 5.10 The White Wall, interpreted using *The Framework of Informed Consent*

Starting on the right-hand side, the white wall was designed to signal to artists that they should do graffiti – the aim was to encourage young men from Mjølnerparken to make the space their own. Instead, ZUSA saw this wall as an opportunity for part of their city-wide campaign of paste-ups, something they could get away with installing as they were 45-year-old Danish guys. So, they developed a work inspired by action painting and that responded to another artwork

that was already in-situ, by choosing a horror theme. In contrast, Mjølnerparken residents did not graffiti here, as they were concerned that they would draw the attention of the police. This was due to wider stereotyping of young Muslim men.

5.2.2 Episode 2: The Slope

This episode investigates the interactions with an unkempt slope (Figure 5.11). This brings to light in what ways, and to what extent the designed landscape fulfils its aim to empower the residents of Mjølnerparken, by designing a landscape that discharges greater benefit and equity to them.

The episode first introduces the slope, as observed during the field study. Then it considers the interactions that designed the slope and returns to unpack the everyday interactions that are now changing it. The differences between the designed intent and the everyday changes are examined to consider how and why consent is being discharged in a way not predicted by the participatory design process.

Figure 5.11: The Slope, and other key features (Authors' annotations on image from Google Earth 3/9/20).

The slope rises from the side of Nørrebroruten, the cycleway that passes through Grønne Park (Figure 5.12). Its top is level with the concrete rim of a basketball court cum skate-bowl. These higher levels form the level of the surrounding landscape. Then moving east, another slope drops down into Mjølnerparken. This area provides an informal route for people to come from the four red brick blocks of the social housing complex, Mjølnerparken to Nørrebroruten, and

wider Grønne Park. It is an east facing slope about 15m long and is relatively steep with approximately 1:3 gradient. The orientation of the slope, and the arrangement of buildings around the Grønne Park mean that this slope is one of the sunniest here.

Figure 5.12 View of The Slope, facing towards Tagensvej (Image: Author's own, 04/19)

5.2.2.1 How the designers' intended to shape consent here

There were three main factors which, together influenced the design of the slope: the client's brief, participatory design practices and the design concept. Each will be expanded below to consider how they intended to inform how the materialised landscape would discharge beneficence.

By the brief

Superkilen was part of a large investment programme which aimed to address the inequitable social outcomes experienced by the residents of Mjølnerparken. The brief was set by Copenhagen Municipality and Realdania. The aim was "to give the neighbourhood around Mimersgade on Nørrebro in Copenhagen a new and more positive identity for the benefit of those who live in the area". The objective was to do this "with an architectural boost, [including] the establishment of Superkilen, as a new urban space" (Realdania, 2004). This brief provides a clear framing of developing the *justice* the landscape would discharge and to whom; primarily the relative inequity of the residents of Mjølnerparken. The designers considered this brief and focused in on one way in which the residents of Mjølnerparken were different, "the brief was to: deal with the issue of migration in this neighbourhood" (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). They used this as the understanding that guided how they developed design decisions, so that those discussions would empower the autonomy of the residents of Mjølnerparken by focusing on this difference.

By design expertise

The design team described how their autonomy would enable them to do good here, and reduce the social inequity experienced by the residents of Mjølnerparken, "the true skill of the architect, which is to find ways of facilitating, to reach this magical solution where everybody gets his or her needs satisfied and desires fulfilled" (Steiner, 2013, p. 70). However, the design team also noted their autonomy to do good was limited because, "citizen involvement has become mandatory" and they found the discussions "absurd" and "completely nonsense" and attended by "white middle-aged men" (2DesGP1, personal communication, 19 January 2019). They concluded that "participation processes are kind of trendy, but for ambitious design they are quite an impediment … leading only to mediocre results" (Steiner, 2013, p. 49).

The design team responded to these two concerns, about how to best empower their professional autonomy and about the inequity of who participates, by designing a "parallel" participatory process. They called their bespoke approach to participation, "participation extreme", which "works as a critique also, in a way of doing participant participatory process

in this kind of setting" and that for local people, including Mjølnerparken residents, it would be a way to make the participatory design process "more understandable for them, or was a way for them where they actually could engage" (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). So, they took inspiration from a well-known popular format, "TV shows of extreme makeovers", where "this lucky family, they got to choose" (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). So in practice, participation extreme was about "the idea that people should be represented in the park by choosing objects" (2Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2019). Crucially, this also empowered the design team, as local peoples' role was constrained to selecting objects, with no influence on their spatial location.

By developing a design concept

The concept was inspired by a particular landscape type, colonial English gardens. They referred to it this as the 'English Landscape Garden'. This type of literally migrated objects from across the globe onto a lawn in England – an approach that did not primarily focus on the local place (or site). Stanfield and van Riemsdijk, amongst other scholars, problematised their use of this landscape typology as "the inspiration he invoked was the colonial English garden, in which Europeans collected items gathered during imperialist ventures. This European fascination with the collection of foreign objects was intertwined with racialised, exotified views of non-Europeans as the 'other' (Said, 1978 in Stanfield & Riemsdijk, 2019).

However, this critical understanding of how the chosen landscape typology limited the beneficence of introducing "foreign objects" was both unacknowledged, and potentially unknown to the design team. The design team adopted the landscape typology as a spatial device to literally materialise their perception of how Mjølnerparken residents are different: migration. They described this as a "carpet on which the objects are standing" (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). Part of that 'carpet' was the slope.

The objects were not just chosen by Mjølnerparken residents, but by any local person or group. They could propose any object: "it can be where you are from, or it could be from a while ago or holiday or whatever, or something you saw on the internet. So became a kind of weird copy paste party, where we would like people to nominate objects" (2Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2019). In addition, the trees and planting were all non-Danish

species, “everything within the park is from elsewhere … it doesn’t have a Danish connection…when you are actually in the realm of the park, you are in a different world” (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). The design team understood this design concept would represent all local people positively, and as the same: they are all global citizens, and local citizens of Nørrebro, Copenhagen’s most diverse suburb. This approach can be interpreted as a way of ‘showing good’, so beneficence, but not a substantive re-negotiation of equity – or justice.

It is noteworthy that the local people did not make the final selection of objects or position the objects on the site. Instead, the design team selected items from the full range of objects proposed and even prepared a catalogue of possibilities for those local people who had no idea what to propose. The design team then curated the objects and other global elements, such as the planting, across Grønne Park (2DesMj4, personal communication, 21 April 2019; Steiner, 2013).

The design team described how their hopes for Nørrebro’s diverse people is reflected in the relationships between objects, “somehow, they [the objects] talked more to each other and created more interesting spaces in between them than before” (2DesGP1, personal communication, 19 January 2019, p. 8). Therefore, the design team developed a participatory design process to support a spatial concept where ‘foreign objects’ would ‘talk to each other’ in order to create new spatial possibilities. The implication here is that the designs literally represent the cultural diversity of people in Nørrebro in one place.

This could also be argued as materialisation of the “Danish culture of consensus: every point of view has to be heard, and every concern has to be satisfied” which the design team admires (Steiner, 2013, p. 70). But this process did not actually include an opportunity for people, including the residents of Mjølnerparken, to be heard or satisfied, as there were no practices for the re-negotiation of relative justices and injustices during the participatory design process.

In summary, the design team aimed to make the design process more understandable and appealing to the residents of Mjølnerparken, in order to make the participatory design process more just. Alongside this they distilled an understanding of what the design team perceived as what was driving the inequity experienced by the residents of Mjølnerparken: migration. They

used this to design a participatory procedure in which all local people could propose global objects. However, they positioned another aim at a higher level – to *strengthen the autonomy of the design team* according to the *values and beliefs* that the design team had about professional design interactions with local people. So, whilst 'participation extreme' and 'English landscape garden' typology aimed to shape greater consent, it is a consent whose values are derived from, and therefore authentic to, the design team.

This pinpoints a key concern with this participatory design process: that the participation was focused on individual people or groups having a pre-existing relationship with an object, not on how to make decisions about the space around and under them. The space of Superkilen was instead conceptualised by the design team as a flat, supporting actor: three carpets: red, black – and the green of Grønne Park. It is notable that the green is the only living surface, grassed. The red and black were asphalt. This grass is ordinary Danish grass, so it differs from other non-native planting across Superkilen, but it appears this was not considered during the design process. The drawn designs and models show this green to be carpet-like: an even neon, flat green colour.

5.2.2.2 How the grassed slope shaped consent here?

The next part of this episode will shift to considering the life of one element within this carpet: a grassed slope. This helps understand the implications of this particular participatory design process for this place: how it enabled and limited the shaping of consent. This episode will focus on how different gardeners are adapting the slope in response to their own ways of doing good here – paying particular attention to one volunteer gardener who has formalised his work with the municipality.

Unequal mowing

The 'carpet' at Grønne Park includes a number of grassed slopes. The field study observed that the grassed slopes were unkempt for most of the year (Figure 5.13). The municipal gardener describes how, "once a week we cut it with a machine", but the machine cannot mow on the slopes because, "Copenhagen is very flat" and their equipment was bought with the whole city

in mind (2Mun4, personal communication, 31 January 2019). Once a year an external contractor is paid to come with specialist equipment. But soon the difference returns: slopes of long grass and other adventive and native plants, next to areas of flat, short, mown grass. These slopes have developed a distinct autonomy, empowered by this unequal mowing which has destabilised the designed intent of the green, and so invited undesigned practices to change the slopes.

Figure 5.13: Unmown Slopes across Grønne Park, Superkilen. (Image: Author's' own 2018-2019)

By reducing municipal harm, by caring for nature

One local man, a gardener, cycled past the area and noticed that this landscape was not being cared for. He considered this a result of a lack of investment in municipal gardeners, "people who have the job, they are paid the least". He understands this lack of investment as part of a bigger concern for how beneficence is discharged in Copenhagen: "I think they talk a hell of a

lot about more trees, more nature in Copenhagen, but in fact they kill a hell of a lot all the time. They build, they build and they build …" (2Loc4, personal communication, 11 November 2018).

He compares this situation with his own autonomy, outside the municipal system. He receives disability benefits and so can spend his time caring for plants. He describes himself as "rich poor", rich in well-being and time, but financially poor. His autonomy to do this work has been developed not only through his state empowered autonomy, but through how he has used his time. He has not been able to work full time, so has instead become engaged with urban debates about the role of nature. First, through his long-term connection to the largest school garden in Denmark, the nearby Lersøparkens Skolehaver (Lersø Park School Garden). He describes how school gardens are having a resurgence in Denmark. This is because more people want children to experience the *benefits* that comes through contact with nature. There is an unwelcome inequity experienced between country and city children: "country children are lost in nature and all those things". So, they [city children] also need it [nature]." So, this city school garden is acting as a model for others. The gardener reports that he is now supporting "the architects who made the school gardens [as they] are going to make the new school garden … into their new arrangement [of new build schools]." Secondly, he approaches public space owners about areas they own, and asks if he can do some "discrete rewilding in city nature". He negotiates an agreement, and then re-introduces and cares for planting, and educates people about it.

This slope is one of those places. The gardener selected this slope to work on as he understood it is, "one of the two sunny places" at Grønne Park and because it is on the main route, Nørrebroruten: "I think more people, more butterflies, bees and so on will find this". He also notes the people on the balconies of the private housing on Heimdalsgade overlook the slope (seen on the left-hand side of Figure 5.12 and Figure 5.14). He adds that he also "likes it": being watched motivates him to do the work here (2Loc4, personal communication, 11 November 2018).

Localising doing good, through Municipal Co-Creation.

His *autonomy* to do his *good* work at Grønne Park was authorised by the municipality. He sought their authorisation as he has learnt it is vital to sustaining his work and therefore discharging beneficence. He met the municipal architects at Grønne Park and explained his values and plans, "after a couple of minutes they said 'okay'". He now has a "Co-Creation Contract" to maintain this slope (2Loc4, personal communication, 11 November 2018). This type of contract is part of Copenhagen Municipality's, 'Co-Creation Copenhagen Policy' (Københavns Kommune, 2015). The aim is that local people "co-create and [get] involved in the local area. Its purpose is to uplift the area…so you bind the city better together". The Co-Creation policy responded to earlier decades of local activism in Copenhagen and in particular, in Nørrebro (Rutt & Loveless, 2018). It has formalised activist practices into activities the municipality could partner. The municipality has also harnessed strategic benefits for the city, including cost savings from park maintenance, and harm reduction. There were particular concerns that the municipality should be responsive in Nørrebro and harness the good and avoid the harm of protests and autonomous spatial activation, because people here were "strong people, highly educated" from the "creative class" (2Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2019).

Synthesising to reduce past harms, and designing benefits from nature

The gardener's investigation of the slope revealed that the soil is full of "glass, ashes, shit", left behind by former industrial workshops. This *understanding* informed the gardener's design process and drew him to two precedents. Firstly, 'The High Line' in New York, which the gardener considered as a parallel to Superkilen in that it was also a world-renowned landscape. He understood that the 'The High Line' was "inspired by the self-seeded landscape that grew wild for 25yrs after the trains stopped running", despite the poor soil of a post-industrial site. Secondly, the Island of Nekselø, "up North-Northwest Zealand. There you have Nekselø…the plants live as pearls on the small, small Nekselø … [it is the] Danish Galapagos." He evokes the Galapagos in relation to the plant life of Nekselø, noting that there the island is, "full of sun… no matter the weather … but the ground is really bad so they [the plants] grow so well … if it

was fat, it would be a forest." The plants, as mentioned, aren't all natives, some are adventive but all thrive on a place he regards as the epitome of Danish nature: Nekselø. The gardener also has access to free plants from Nekselø, "I took some seeds 40 years ago and produced hell of a lot" and they are now growing in 'his' gardens throughout Copenhagen. Through precedents he developed a design concept to "make a small place of Nekselø for inspiring people" at Grønne Park (Figure 5.15). This planting differs from the designed intent of this green carpet, to host global objects that start new conversations about migration and so support greater equity for the residents of Mjølnerparken. Instead, the slope has been reconceived to bring attention to the importance of Danish nature in the city. Lastly, to note an absence from these precedents: the Nekselø gardener had no knowledge of the original design team's intent for how to shape consent here (2Loc4, personal communication, 11 November 2018).

Making good by planting

The slope's planting was not designed on paper (Figure 5.14). Instead, practical wisdom shapes his decisions, "I think with my feet and my hands … I've done it for many, many years and now I'm becoming a bit more clever." He walks through the bed and communicates the importance of each plant by describing its interactions with humans, marvelling at how 'nature' improves our lives, a wild "carrot comes [originally] from Afghanistan", another is an "edible plant and is sweet … soldiers they have to learn … 30 different wild plants…this is one of them". Another hosts the "largest butterfly in Scandinavia, they put their eggs on this plant." The butterfly cannot survive the climate of Copenhagen, but "he liked the story". The gardener's autonomy is underscored by his gardening phronesis and his design process, which supports him to discharge his idea of how to do good and reduce the harm of urbanisation by telling the stories of Nekselø's plants (2Loc4, personal communication, 11 November 2018).

Figure 5.14: The planted slope (Image: Author's own 07/18)

By Enclosure: to establish and sustain the benefits of rewilding with Danish nature

The gardener is clear that for Copenhageners to benefit from nature, he needs to ensure it is well-established here. It is "necessary to take care of them maybe every year … the first year is very important". He also needs to protect it from local harm as "three weeks ago I could see that they had started to run through" – the children from Mjølnerparken were running between their homes and Grønne Park and using the grassed area to play on. So, he erected what he named a "Children's' Fence" (2Loc4, personal communication, 11 November 2018) (Figure 5.15). This fence is within the bed, rather than around it: pruned branches from the Foreningen Skolehave (garden belonging to the core garden of the school garden association) are stuck amongst the Nekselø plants. So, if children run through their legs will be scratched. His focus is to place constraints on the use of this slope, so it can discharge the benefits of rewilding in Copenhagen. But in practice, he is coercing Mjølnerparken children away from using the slope and this exclusion is constraining the autonomy of these children to derive benefit from Grønne Park, in a way the designs did not intend. It is notable that the field study observed that it is mainly the Mjølnerparken children who come this way, so this is reducing their equity as park users. It isn't in keeping with the spirit of the Co-Creation contract as understood by the municipality, where the contractor: "likes to be there, they feel it is like more or less their backyard. As long as they don't put up fences … that would be a problem. I like them to take over, in respect for other peoples of course because it is everyone's space" (2Mun1, personal communication, 13 February 2019).

In sum, this fence emerged from practical wisdom about how to establish and sustain a particular vision of how to do good here: by rewilding the city. This garden was authorised by the municipality but was not aligned with how Grønne Park was intended to do good here. The conceptualisation of the slopes in the participatory design process as simply a backdrop for the objects, played a significant part in how this came about.

Figure 5.15 The Slope, close-up of planting with upright sticks (Image: Authors own, 02/19)

Other slopes: interactions between different ways of doing good

This slope is not an isolated occurrence. During his visits here, the gardener has noticed other areas of the landscape which require care. He is planting primroses along edges which the municipal mower cannot reach (see Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.16 Primula planted by the gardener on unmown edge of new retaining wall (Image: Authors' own 02/19)

His autonomous practices are not the only ones observed during the field study. Others are throwing seed bombs, which thrive in the un-mowable long grassed areas under the trees (Figure 5.17). Another man collects adventive nettles for "delicious free soup" from these longer grassed areas. But our gardener states firmly that, "I would never do that". These plantings do not fit with how he intends to do good here (2Loc4, personal communication, 11 November 2018).

Figure 5.17 Other local plant practices: seed-bombing with crocuses, and collecting nettle for soup (Image: Author's Own 03/19)

The Municipality Gardener has his own view on the rewilding gardeners' ways of doing good, "it's a mess … but I think it's okay…flowers are always nice". Despite his expert knowledge of Danish plants, he does not recognise this place as a 'small piece of Nekselø' [nature], in much the same way that visitors to Superkilen do not know why there is a collection of global objects here (2Mun4, personal communication, 31 January 2019). This lack of awareness of the intent behind landscape interactions was confirmed by Bo-Vita, the social housing organisation that runs Mjølnerparken. They stated that the story's behind the collection of objects was "not at all" known (2Loc1, personal communication, 13 February 2019). Instead, participant interviews showed that the *benefit* that Grønne Park users derived from the park was to: "walk through the green, it's a good break away from the road noise" (personal communication, 2018). This benefit, of green space, was one highlighted by local people throughout the planning and design of Superkilen – and in fact was a vocal critique of the current design in the media, as the other two areas are asphalted.

In sum, this episode has shown how the constraints on local people, during participation extreme, were primarily intended to empower the design team's autonomy. This autonomy included a particular understanding of the residents of Mjølnerparken, which became a design decision to locate migrated global objects onto a normative Danish backdrop. Whilst the objects have remained largely stable, they are not well understood. The main subject of the episode is a gardener whose intent is in stark contrast to the designed one. He is rewilding Grønne Park with Danish nature, introducing his own ideas of how to do good here. These ideas are constrained and enabled by municipal practices.

5.2.2.3 Synopsis, with Consent

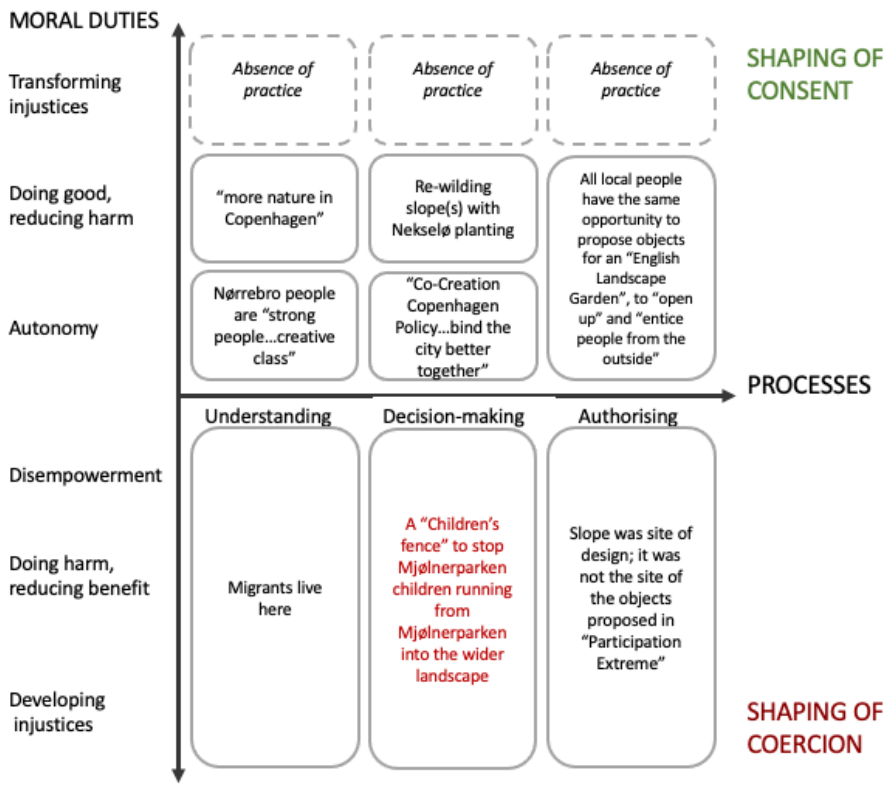

Figure 5.18 The Slope, interpreted using *The Framework of Informed Consent*

This framework examines The Slope (Figure 5.18). Nørrebro residents are strong people – full of creativity. Their past activism in making and shaping their places stimulated Copenhagen Municipality to adopt a co-creation approach, to 'bind the city better together'. A co-creation contract was agreed with a gardener, who believed there needed to be 'more nature in Copenhagen', and so was rewilding various plots around the city. But to sustain this he erected a 'Children's Fence' to stop children running across from Mjølnerparken. In contrast, the original intent was to benefit Mjølnerparken residents. The design team had adopted a participation process where local people proposed global objects, in order to give primary attention to the residents of Mjølnerparken, as migrants. This participation process, focused on migrants, did not engage with the wider landscape – including the slope.

5.2.3 Episode 3: The Fence

This episode investigates interactions with an overgrown fence along the Heimdalsgade side of Grønne Park. It examines how the participatory design process guided the existence of the multiple, concurrent frames of understanding into *coercing or constraining* of each other, so impacting on the shaping of consent during the process – and the resultant designs and landscape.

The episode starts by examining why this fence line (Figure 5.19) is within this landscape, explaining its presence as a vestige from the participatory design process which did not achieve consent for an alternative design feature, a proposed pathway. The pathway was inscribed in the final design proposals and would have provided a direct link between Mjølnerparken and Heimdalsgade. The episode then uses the findings of the field study to examine how interactions with the fence are shaping consent within Grønne Park, including to what extent the designed place has changed the interactions between the residents of Mjølnerparken and other local residents.

Figure 5.19: The Fence, also showing the proposed pathway giving access through a courtyard to Heimdalsgade (Image: Google Earth 30/03/22, authors' annotations)

5.2.3.1 How did the design process shape consent here?

This length of fence is around 25 metres long. It lies along the side of the thin wedge of land that is now Grønne Park (see Figure 5.19). On the final design drawings, as shown to local people in 2010, the fence included a gap (Figure 5.20b), so that the fence was no longer a barrier between Grønne Park and Heimdalsgade. The design team explained that "the idea was to actually open up along the sides" of Grønne Park and so create a seamless flow that interconnected the residents of Mjølnerparken with other local housing areas (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019) (Figure 5.20a). It would have also allowed the cycle and pedestrian pathways to cross the boundaries of Grønne Park through the fence and interconnect Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park to wider Copenhagen, via established cycle and pedestrian networks. Similar work was also being done on the other side Mjølnerparken where the housing area backed onto derelict railyards and active train tracks. This derelict area is now Mimersparken, and there are plans for a rail-bridge.

This idea to spatially and socially 'open up' the area was a key concept employed in the wider area renewal process. The design team at Grønne Park also understood the site as connected to the fears held by some Copenhageners about the residents of Mjølnerparken. They described how the site was "just a backside. No one dared actually going there…it was dark…it was risky … it was very dark. You couldn't view through it" (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). The design team considered open and well illuminated sightlines were particularly important because in Denmark they generally "use very little [artificial] light and it gets really dark in the winter here." This aim to 'open up' included a design intent that trees were well maintained, so that low branches would not obscure sightlines and the tidiness would indicate a good area (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019).

Image removed for copyright compliance

Figure 5.20a: (top) Detail from the final design presentation, depicting all proposed circulation within and into/ out of Grønne Park. (Image: Design Team, 2009, author has annotated proposed pathway – orange star)

Figure 5.20b: (bottom) Detail from the final design presentation, depicting the different areas of Grønne Park (Image: Design Team 2009, author has annotated proposed pathway – orange star)

However, during municipal meetings about the designs it became clear that the residents of Heimdalsgade (an adjoining community) "were afraid of opening up because they didn't want the people from the social housing (Mjølnerparken) coming in" (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). However, the design team did not think their concerns were valid. They considered the municipal public consultation process as, "extremely rigid" and not supportive of design expertise: "anything extraordinary…magical, we get voted down." The design team therefore made the decision to filter the information they gathered from public consultations. They rationalised their dismissal of the Heimdalsgade locals' fears of the people

of Mjølnerparken doing them harm, by reflecting on their own experiences of living and working in Nørrebro since the 1990s, “it’s very hard to say what is risky – is it because people perceive it as risky…or were there actually things happening” (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019, personal communication, 3 May 2019). They also reflected on recent local politics, “this project was all about integration; it was like six months after the riots, after the Mohammed cartoon crisis. It was so present in this neighbourhood and people in Denmark were suffering a bit from the ambiguity of being tolerant” (Steiner, 2013, p. 12).

So, the key members of the design team, whilst appointed for their international profile, drew on their experience of living and working in Nørrebro since the 1990s. This included temporary interventions on this landscape (2DesGP1, personal communication, 19 January 2019). This self-positioning of the design team, as experts in the local perspective, shows how dissonant local understandings can interact with each other to shape consent (or non-consent). In this case, the local-cum-design team filtered out points of view from residents that were different to their own (2DesGP1, personal communication, 19 January 2019; 2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019, p. 12).

It is worth noting that Mjølnerparken had been labelled a ‘ghetto’ by the Danish government, but not for its crime levels (see Origin Story). So, the design team’s decision to ignore local fears of crime was not without basis. The point here is that they did not successfully negotiate the understanding behind the design with local people, and instead arbitrated independently using their own experience.

As a result, during the development of design decisions, the focus of the design team was on resolving the impeded sightlines – as the source of local fears, rather than resolving the concerns of the residents of Heimdalsgade (2DesGP1, personal communication, 19 January 2019; 2Loc1, personal communication, 13 February 2019, p. 12). They participated in municipal meetings and were aware of the local perspectives but considered their role was to filter that information and decide how to ‘do good’ here. There is an absence of any design intervention or municipal practice to transform the relationship between the residents of Heimdalsgade and Mjølnerparken and reduce the harm that causes. The client and design team expected that designed landscape will be sufficient to achieve that goal. However, their design logic did not change the minds of the residents of Heimdalsgade.

The new pathway was designed to exit Grønne Park through the private land of the ex-Biscuit Factory on Heimdalsgade and onto Heimdalsgade (see Figure 5.19 & 5.20). The back side of this ex-biscuit factory faces Grønne Park. It is now used by a range of businesses and sporting organisations as offices and workout space. Like the wider Heimdalsgade community, the owners of the Heimdalsgade ex-Biscuit Factory feared the 'opening up' of their area to Mjølnerparken residents. The Danish legal system provides landowners with the ability to block authorisation of developments on their land and so they rejected the pathway (2DesGP1, personal communication, 19 January 2019; 2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). In summary, they refused to authorise this element in the designs because the idea of 'opening up' coerced them away from their deeply held belief that the people of Mjølnerparken would *do them harm* (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019; BIG et al., 2009).

The design team reflected further on this experience during interviews in 2019, noting that making a new path connection at this point was still not possible due to a lack of local consent, "not yet … maybe it will never happen here, but I definitely think that here it should" (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). The implication is that the participatory design process, including the municipal public consultation, filtered out understandings it didn't agree with but ultimately did not resolve the dissonance. This is curious because Superkilen is celebrated and has received multiple international awards for having successfully disrupted the negative narrative of Mjølnerparken's non-white residents – notably an Aga Kahn Award for Architecture, which describes it as, "a public space promoting integration across lines of ethnicity, religion and culture" (Aga Kahn Award, 2016). This points to how *justice* is developed and will be further developed in the discussion.

5.2.3.2 How did The Fence shape consent here?

The story of this episode will now consider what consent the designs did shape, by examining the resultant landscape, which indicates the actual transformation that occurred, unlike the participatory design process, a place cannot filter out local dissonance.

This section draws primarily on the field study in 2018-19. The fence area adjoining the Heimdalsgade biscuit factory is now a vestige of the original 'back side' landscape. From Nørrebroruten, the main cycle path, the fence is hidden by a mound and trees added during

the Grønne Park design process. The design team reflected on this situation, noting that "the idea of opening up [was] to kind of prevent having these [back sites]" (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019).

By 2018-19, the fence was covered in ivy and topped with loops of barbed wire (Figure 5.21). Observation of the site revealed that both these elements had been initiated on the Heimdalsgade's side (Fence and Slope Fieldnotes, personal communication, 2018). The ivy grows down the fence into Grønne Park, and obscures graffiti tags on the fence's surface. The Heimdalsgade side of the fence is clean of graffiti, although overgrown and the source of the ivy. In this way, the fence has further reinforced a separation between the two areas, but it is also notable that it is Heimdalsgade that is the source of the ivy coercing the landscape away from the design intent to 'do good here', by keeping the area well-maintained, and opening up sightlines (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019).

Figure 5.21a: (left) View from Heimdalsgade: The Fence, covered in dark green ivy (Image: Author's Own 04/19)
Figure 5.21b: (right) View from Grønne Park: The Fence, covered in dark green ivy (Image: Author's Own 04/19)

On the Grønne Park side the grass is overgrown at the fence's base (Figure 5.22), attracting adventive plants, such as stinging nettles.

Figure 5.22: Multiple views of The Fence: overgrown, desire paths to the back corner and litter (Image: Author's own 04/19)

This grass is overgrown because the municipality uses 'the big machine, to mow the flat bits and round the trees." The big machine, a ride-on mower (Figure 5.23), cannot access this area behind a slope, 'it is really hard to maintain it here … into the fence (2Mun4, personal communication, 31 January 2019)'. The design team were unaware of this practical constraint on caring for the landscape, describing how only after the designs were constructed did they recognise that, "the municipality doesn't really have money to maintain the park as it 'should be' (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019)." However, if the proposed pathway had been built then it is likely that some of this 'back side' area would have been mowable.

Figure 5.23: Municipal Mower (Image: Author's own 04/19)

The gardening team also commented that their ability to care for the plants and trees is restricted because most of their time is spent collecting litter, with a particular focus on the publicly visible areas of the Grønne Park. The gardeners consider that ethnically Danish people are, "very big swine" and that the littering in Copenhagen, "you don't see it in other towns in Europe." It is significant that they also observed that the residents of Mjølnerparken were not responsible for the litter problem (2Mun4, personal communication, 31 January 2019) which contrasts with the fears previously reported about antisocial behaviour. This lack of time available to the gardeners for tree care, resulted in the trees sprouting multiple low branches (Figure 5.24). This contrasts with the design team intention that, "trees were supposed to have clear stems … so you can see through them basically" and so adds to the enclosure of this area (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). It is reasonable to conclude that the lack of appropriate care here is coercing the landscape away from the design's tidy and visibly open intent. So Grønne Park's empowerment to resolve the inequity of the residents of Mjølnerparken has become further eroded.

Figure 5.24: View of The Fence, with unpruned tree (Image: Authors' Own 04/19)

This poorly maintained and out of sight area forms a semi-private space. Amongst these weeds, desire paths have been made, with telling litter left amongst the grass and weeds. Public drinking of alcohol and urination is legal and broadly accepted in Denmark and it is common to see øldrikkers (beer drinkers) in public places (2Mun4, personal communication, 31 January 2019; Fieldnotes 2018-19). These are men who are mostly reliant on state benefits to sustain themselves and have homes to return to but spend their days publicly drinking alcohol. Participant interviews undertaken at Grønne Park, with Nørrebro residents (ethnic Danes) indicated that these øldrikkers, unlike the residents of Mjølnerparken, are considered "harmless" and that "they belong in public space" (Fieldnotes 02/03/19). Between the trees and the fence-line, the litter consistently indicated that the area was also being used in place of public toilets, presumably by these ethnically Danish, male 'øldrikkers'. There is no public toilet within comfortable reach of where the øldrikkers gathered, on the side of the basketball court on Grønne Park. The closest toilet requires walking through Mjølnerparken, to Mimersparken, arguably within the øldrikkers' reach. However, interviews revealed it was found that Grønne Park users, including the øldrikkers, who weren't residents, or visiting residents, did not go into or through Mjølnerparken – "unless my bike has been stolen, then I will go there to search for it" (participant interviews). The interviewees explained this in terms of their fears of the residents of Mjølnerparken, "my wife was ordering me not to go through there" (2Loc2, personal communication, 16 January 2019).

The field investigations also revealed that the fence-line is not only used as a male toilet, but also for other marginal activities (Figure 5.25). Traces left include multiple alcohol bottles and cans and what appeared to be a stolen backpack, hidden behind a tree – later seen with its contents scattered. Adjacent to the fence, there is a broken door into the Biscuit factory's plant room, breaching the boundary from Grønne Park into the Heimdalsgade side. Warmed by the building's equipment, the plant room appears to have become someone's ad hoc home. The floor was scattered with food packets, drug paraphernalia and a makeshift sleeping area on top of the heating equipment. This developed further over the ten-month duration of this study – demonstrating sustained uninvited interactions are breaching into the Heimdalsgade side.

Throughout the field study, there was no evidence that this area was being used by the residents of Mjølnerparken, for whom alcohol, unlike their Danish counterparts, is not a particular feature of social life. It is fair to argue that they have been *coerced* from this area. The fence area of the landscape appears to have become for the benefit of the Danish øldrikkers, incidentally encouraged by the Danish design team and the landscape maintenance team, and unconstrained by the residents of Heimdalsgade (2Mun4, personal communication, 31 January 2019).

Figure 5.25a: (top left) Inside of plant room, sleeping area on top of equipment (Image: Author's own 04/19)
Figure 5.25b: (right) Broken door into plant room (Image: Author's own 04/19)
Figure 5.25c: (bottom left) Food wrappers in plant room (Image: Author's own 04/19)
Figure 5.25d: (bottom middle) Backpack with supermarket bag containing alcohol (Image: Author's own 04/19)

The øldrikkers are not mentioned as participants in extensive documentation of the participatory design process. Key informants from this study were not aware that the fence had developed this dissonant life (2KI5, personal communication, 16 January 2019). Participant observation of the landscape, over 10 months noted that this area was not maintained by the municipality and whilst police played careful attention to activity at the intersection of Mjølnerparken, Tagensvej and Grønne Park, this area went un-surveilled (Field notes 2018-19). In summary, the interactions between the fence and the øldrikkers have led to this unmaintained, unsupervised area and the types of activities that Heimdalsgade residents feared. But this activity associated with Danish øldrikkers is uncontested by those who designed, maintain, own and police the landscape. It is notable that whilst the primary intent of Grønne Park was to achieve greater equity for the residents of Mjølnerparken, including a higher number of Muslims than in other areas of Copenhagen, it is the alcohol focused lifestyle of the ethnically Danish øldrikkers that is supported by the design of this area of the landscape.

In summary, this episode shows that the absence of participatory design practices to resolve harm and dissonant understandings between local people means that professional-led spatial change has had an unexpected impact on the form and use of the current landscape. In fact, it sustains the separation of the residents of Mjølnerparken from their neighbours at Heimdalsgade, which is the opposite of the municipality's intent. The participatory design practices, including how the design team engaged with the municipal public consultation, ultimately limited the landscape's potential to fulfil the design's intent. The findings also show how the design team coerced Heimdalsgade residents, by excluding their understanding from the design. This led to a coercion of the design intent, as the later consent-shaping process authorisation, was predictably constrained by property ownership. The result was this semi-private space that is alienating to residents of Mjølnerparken and sustains the negative understanding of the area. It also raises the question of how to approach participatory design at the boundaries of public and private land.

This raises one question, posed in two ways. First, how reasonable, and to what extent should a design team commit to the participatory design process transforming specific inequities? Second, can this status quo be improved: how can participatory design get better at negotiating inequities and so make stronger commitments to generating social and spatial justice?

5.2.3.3 Synopsis, with Consent

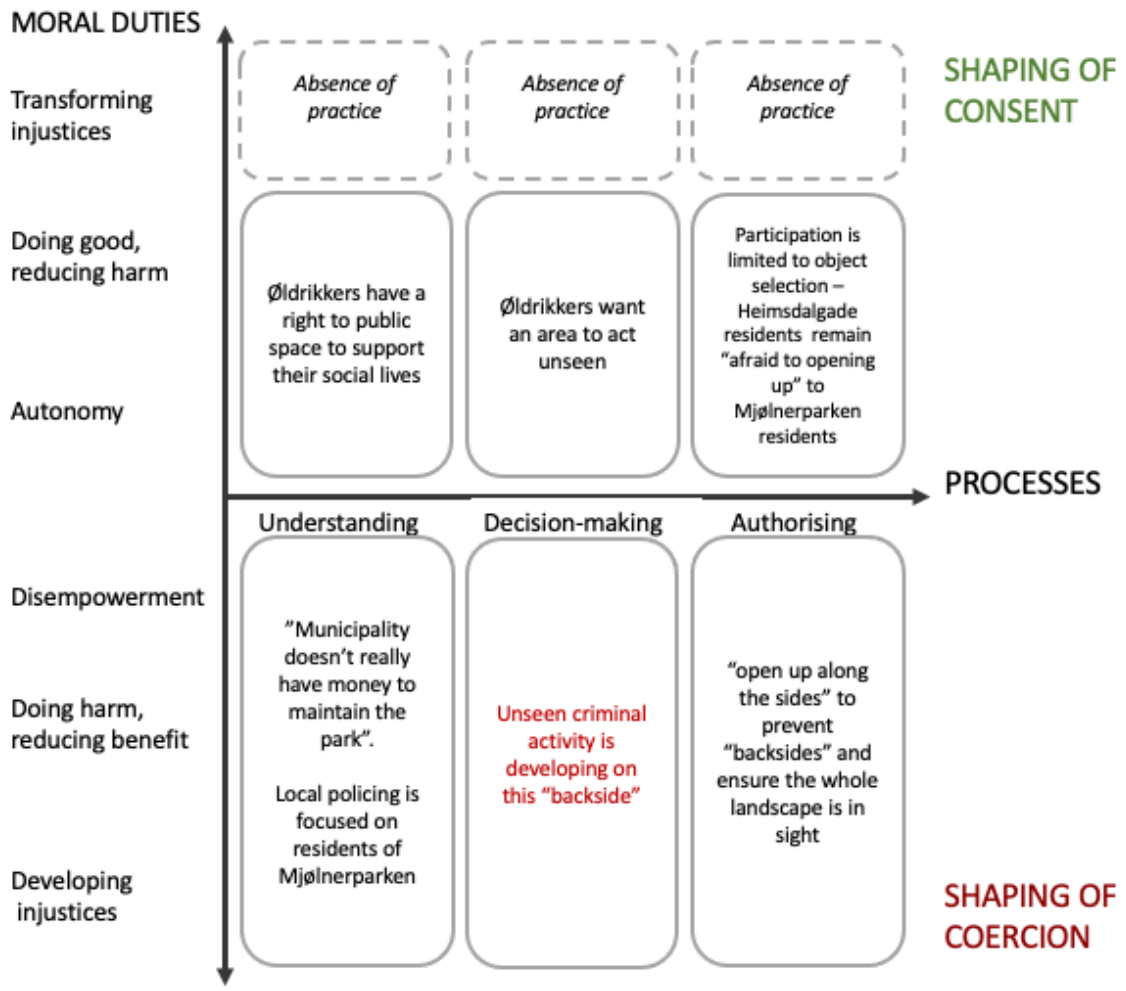

Figure 5.26 The Fence, interpreted using *The Framework of Informed Consent*

This framework (Figure 5.26) shows how the participatory design process failed to negotiate the opening up of the landscape at this fence-line, as the residents of Heimdalsgade were afraid of the residents of Mjølnerparken entering their property and committing crimes. So, the idea of improving sight lines by preventing 'back sides' was curtailed. This 'back side' was not well-maintained, as it was not easy to mow. So, it was adopted by a group of øldrikkers, who needed a semi-private area. The result of their use was that the fence line was not only un-mowed but included litter- and criminal acts such as breaking into a Heimdalsgade property.

5.2.4 Episode 4: The Intersection

This is the final episode in this Case Study and continues to make use of the lens of consent to articulate findings that connect the way Grønne Park was designed with how people interact with it today. This section builds on what was learnt in the previous sections, in order to consider the most substantial shift that has been made since Grønne Park was opened, those associated with the parallel refurbishment of Mjølnerparken itself. The Mjølnerparken design programme, like Grønne Park, was intended to resolve inequities between the residents in Mjølnerparken and wider Copenhagen and Denmark (Københavns Kommune, 2005; Realdania, 2004; Stender & Bech-Danielsen, 2019).

This episode is more complex than the previous ones. It will develop findings through an examination of three different influential phases of interactions with Grønne Park, considering their distinct concerns and also how they have influenced each other. First, findings from the empirical study into interactions on Grønne Park are considered, starting at an area referred to as the 'The Intersection'. This part examines how the landscape now implicitly segregates residents of Mjølnerparken from the Grønne Park. Second, the interactions that led to the initial Grønne Park design are considered. This part builds on findings from prior sections in this Case Study summarising how the participatory design process shaped consent and considering the impact on the intersection. Third, findings from examining the Mjølnerparken design trace how that programme was influenced by the Grønne Park design programme. The two designs programmes and the actors/interactions involved will now be respectively referred to by their primary spatial focus: Grønne Park or Mjølnerparken – although both had a collateral impact on each other's sites.

The interactions are interpreted using the moral duties of consent, discharged in order: autonomy, beneficence, and justice. These duties are discharged through the processes of consent: understanding, decision-making and authorisation. Two additional consent-shaping processes are also considered: constraints, restrictions informed by an actors' values and beliefs, and coercion: restrictions that erode an actors' values and beliefs. By considering all of these elements, this section builds on the work done in previous sections, showing how the processes and duties interact to shape consent for particular outcomes.

5.2.4.1 Spatial Segregation

The main finding from the empirical study is that contemporary interactions with Grønne Park's pathways are counter to the aims of both design programmes – which was to reduce the inequities experienced by the residents of Mjølnerparken. The evidence comes from three pathways – the established Mjølnerparken desire line, the newly re-positioned Nørrebroruten, and the new desire line that has replaced the original position of Nørrebroruten. Figure 5.27 presents the main material actors in this section, at the time of the field work. The three pathways are highlighted in orange.

Figure 5.27: The Intersection, of three pathways and other key features (Image: Google Earth 08/08/2020, Author's own annotations)

Mjølnerparken desire line: Eroding local spatial autonomy

This desire line predates the design and construction of Grønne Park and has been sustained through the recent changes to Grønne Park. It is an established and well-used "short-cut" that connects walkers from Tagensvej to Mjølnerparken Blocks 2 and 3 (Fieldnotes 01/19). The alternative to this desire line is a less direct route through Block 1, which includes the

“discomfort” of walking through another courtyard (see Figure 2–28). This discomfort was not fear, but the sense that walking through would intrude in someone’s private area. A particular concern to other residents, given the high number of Muslim residents and the higher degree (than ethnic Danes) privacy desired by Muslim women (Fieldnotes 11/18 – 04/19). The desire line ends at the boundary between Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park, close to the Tagensvej end of Grønne Park – this point is labelled ‘the intersection’ on Figure 5.28. This desire line has materialised through residents from Mjølnerparken *determining* the need for an additional pathway – it is *autonomously* designed by them, for their *benefit.* This renegotiation of a connection can be interpreted as the residents taking action to rebalance *justice* here, to better reflect what residents of Mjølnerparken value.

Figure 5.28: The Intersection, with the built pathway (pink) and the desire pathway (orange) between blocks 2 and 3 of Mjølnerparken and Tagensvej (Image: Google Earth 08/08/20 with Author’s own annotations)

Prior to the recent changes, the Mjølnerparken desire line joined the pedestrian path that ran through Grønne Park. The intersection was on the gradual slope which ran from Grønne Park down to Block 1 of Mjølnerparken (see Figure 5.29). A line of established shrubs screened the

desire line from that pedestrian path. A low hedge also screens apartment windows from the desire line. Therefore, the desire line and accompanying features supported residents of Mjølnerparken to respect and enjoy privacy.

Image removed for copyright compliance

Figure 5.29: View from Mound close to Tagensvej, shortly after opening. Mjølnerparken is on the right (Københavns Kommune, 2014)

Figure 5.30: View of Grønne Park from behind re-profiled Mound (Image: Author's own 02/19)

Recent changes have had a substantive impact on the Mjølnerparken desire line (see Figures 5.29 & 5.30). The pedestrian path through Grønne Park has been replaced with a major cycleway, Nørrebroruten, with a narrow pedestrian path running along its far side. To support the new cycleway (Figure 5.31) two retaining walls have been added, replacing the gentle slope. The lower retaining wall materialises the boundary between Grønne Park and Mjølnerparken in the form of an abrupt change in levels.

Figure 5.31: View from Mjølnerparken desire path: Mjølnerparken desire line is the muddy path on right. Landscape between picnic tables and Mjølnerparken Block 1 (to right of photo) is no longer a slope. It is divided by the new routing of Nørrebruten. Nørrebroruten is bounded by two retaining walls. A narrow pedestrian path is seen on left of Nørrebroruten. (Image: Author's own 02/19)

In order to join or leave Grønne Park at the intersection (see Figures 5.32a & 5.32b), users have to negotiate between a muddy slope and a small, cobbled area on the edge of Nørrebroruten. This is complicated by the change in levels, a signpost, the backside of the handrail (positioned along the pathway down the side of Block 1), and by cyclists not expecting or seeing pedestrians at this point (Figures 5.32c & 5.32d). The residents described how "it's hard to step down but nicer than going through the courtyards" (Fieldnotes, 04/19). This step has therefore

reduced the benefit of this autonomous route, but the residents still want to respect and enjoy privacy within each block's courtyard.

Figure 5.32a (top left) :View from Nørrebroruten of an elderly resident leaving Mjølnerparken (Image: Author's own, 11/18).
Figure 5.32b (top right): Close up of the Intersection (Image: Author's own, 12/19)
Figure 5.32c (bottom right): View towards Tagensvej, showing the intersection, and position of the pedestrian path (Image: Author's own, 02/19)
Figure 5.32d (bottom left): View from pedestrian path, looking across Nørrebroruten to Mjølnerparken, desire path visible on grass (Image: Author's own, 02/19)

The shrubs and hedge, which screened the pathway and the apartment windows, have been removed. Some shrubs have been replaced (see Figure 5.32d). The new ones are currently smaller and are deciduous, so will not provide the same privacy as the older ones. The cycleway is higher than the pedestrian pathway – so increases the visibility into all the flats from Grønne Park. The ground floor flats are the only ones with blinds drawn and so, residents report that they "are dark, not so nice, I wouldn't want one" (Fieldnotes, 04/19). The removal of plants screening the flat reduces the *beneficence* discharged to residents.

It is important to note, that when interviewed, residents of Mjølnerparken were cautious about whether their autonomy was empowered in a way that they could influence change, unlike the actors in previous episodes. They explained this is due to the notoriety of Mjølnerparken and the Danish State's response: "don't complain, it's not good for relations in the area" (Fieldnotes, 04/19). This is in contrast to the autonomy noted in other episodes, of ethnically Danish men, all of whom receive state benefits.

Nørrebroruten, re-routed along the Mjølnerparken side of Grønne Park

Nørrebroruten cycleway has run through this area since before it was Grønne Park. Until recently it ran along the Heimdalsgade side. During the field study it was moved to run along the Mjølnerparken side. Previously, the Mjølnerparken side was just a pedestrian path. Nørrebroruten is a major and busy cycle route, which interconnects the suburb of Nordvest with Nørrebro. There are plans to develop further connections, which include a Nordvest Passage. This is proposed as running through Mjølnerparken and over the train lines beyond Mimersparken.

Copenhagen's long-term commitment and pride in developing its sophisticated cycle network which interconnects with other public transport modes, means there is significant, pre-existing consent shaped for building cycleways: cycleways recognised in Copenhagen as key to urban equity. However, at a neighbourhood scale the intent of Grønne Park was to reduce the inequities experienced by the residents of Mjølnerparken, which shifts the focus. The cycleway includes a pedestrian path (see Figure 5.33a). Pedestrians walking through Grønne Park walk between the upper retaining wall and the fast-moving cycle traffic. Participant interviews

identified that the pathway is narrow and hard to use if you are with friends, pets or children (Fieldnotes, 02/19). Many choose an alternative route: along a desire line that has replaced the original route of Nørrebroruten along the Heimdalsgade side of Grønne Park**.** This shifts pedestrian traffic away from Mjølnerparken.

Figure 5.33a (left): View from after the Intersection of pedestrian path, Nørrebroruten and Mjølnerparken (Image: Author's own, 02/19)
Figure 5.33b (right): View towards the Intersection with Mjølnerparken residents crossing Nørrebroruten to reach the pedestrian path (Image: Author's own, 02/19)

At 'the intersection' of the Mjølnerparken desire line and the pedestrian path there is no formal crossing (See Figure 5.33b) and the new, narrow pedestrian path is only accessible if you first cross the busy cycleway. There are steps up the upper retaining wall, but these are located further down the pedestrian path,and as noted previously there are no steps down the lower retaining wall to Mjølnerparken (Figures 5.34a & 5.34b). Residents of Mjølnerparken were not observed on the upper grassed area and interviews confirmed that "I don't use the area, how would I get there now they have changed this?" (Participant Interviews,04/19; Fieldnotes, 11/18-04/19). The green leisure area was only observed in use on a small number of occasions, across the time of this study (Fieldnotes, 11/18 - 04/19). It was notable that the leisure area was also empty during public holidays, when other nearby green and picnic areas were busy (Figure 5.35) (Fieldnotes, 08/18 & 04/19). Residents of Mjølnerparken reported and were

observed choosing Mimersparken (the park on the other side of Mjølnerparken) and non-residents were choosing other public spaces - further away from Mjølnerparken.

Figure 5.34a (left): The Steps (Image: Author's own, 02/19)
Figure 5.34b (right): View from Mjølnerparken desire line. The Steps are positioned halfway down the upper retaining wall (Image: Author's own, 02/19)

Figure 5.35a (top left) View of Grønne Park leisure area near intersection on a public holiday (Image: Author's own, 04/19)
Figure 5.35b (top right) View of Sorte Plads (Black Square adjacent to Grønne Park on a public holiday (Image: Author's own, 04/19)
Figure 5.35c (bottom left) View from Mjølnerparken of Mimersparken on a public holiday (Image: Author's own, 04/19
Figure 5.35d (bottom right) View of Grønne Park nearer Sorte Plads on a public holiday (Image: Author's own, 04/19)

The desire line replacing the original route of Nørrebroruten: a better way for non-Mjølnerparken residents.

The original design of Grønne Park maintained the existing position of Nørrebroruten, along the Heimdalsgade side of the landscape. When Nørrebroruten was repositioned, its route was grassed over. However, local interactions led to a pedestrian desire line replacing the removed cycleway (Figure 5.36).

Figure 5.36a (left) :View towards Tagensvej: pedestrian desire line leaving Nørrebroruten (Image: Author's own, 04/19)
Figure 5.36b (right): View of Heimdalsgade fence: desire line in front of relocated benches (Image: Author's own, 04/19)

The interaction was that pedestrians self-selected this route through the landscape. This was due to the experience of the pedestrian path along Nørrebroruten and the relative qualities of this route. Pedestrians described selecting this route, "to have some time in nature", "to enjoy time walking in green area with friends" and "to walk away from the traffic in a green park" (Fieldnotes, 04/19). So, the users *understood* greater *benefit* in this path, than the alternative along the side of Nørrebroruten and space allowed them the *autonomy* to gain that *benefit*. They also recognised the *inequity* between the two pedestrian routes, despite them having access to both from Tagensvej. The *benefits* they understood was due to it being a green space, which to recap, was a key concern of local people that was deflected by the participatory design process.

The relevant interaction was that walkers did not stop here and use the picnic area. Some walkers commented that the replacement and relocation of established trees and their subsequent death, had eroded the *benefit* they derived from this space and its elevation above Mjølnerparken and Nørrebroruten made the picnic area less attractive than the Heimdalsgade side of the green leisure area (Fieldnotes, 04/19). So, they kept walking through along the desire line. Also, when changes were made to Mjølnerparken the soil was compacted by the plates put down for the diggers to run over (2DesMj2, personal communication, 7 February 2019; 2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019). In addition, the landscape was reprofiled when Nørrebroruten was removed. This was requested by the police. They wanted better sightlines from Tagensvej through the landscape. But the repositioned mounds have led to drainage issues and tree deaths. Which in turn has led to diggers returning to the site along the route of the desire line and further compounding the compaction of the soil (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019). The compacted soil has made it hard to grow grass, sustaining this vestige of Nørrebroruten – to users this looks like a path (Figure 5.37) (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019). This vestige is despite considerable efforts by the municipality to regrow the grass – including fencing it off for a period. The repositioned mounds have also reduced the benefit that local people gain from the landscape, as the original (pre-Grønne Park) mounds were added in the 1980s, to reduce road noise on the landscape (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019).

Figure 5.37a (bottom left) :View from Leisure Area towards Tagensvej: visible are brown grass areas from digger plates, reprofiled mound and replaced trees (Image: Author's own, 04/19)

Figure 5.37b (top right): View from Nørrebroruten/pedestrian desire line intersection, looking towards Tagensvej: visible are brown grass areas from digger plates and tracks, reprofiled mound and replacement trees (Image: Author's own, 04/19)

Figure 5.37c (right): View from Leisure Area towards Heimdalsgade fence and housing: erosion around trunks of new trees visible, caused by run off from reprofiled slopes and compacted soil. (Image: Author's own, 04/19)

Also, the hammock and benches have been relocated from the side of the original pedestrian pathway (past Mjølnerparken) to the Heimdalsgade side. These popular features encourage people to walk this route and now remove an incentive for people to linger along the Mjølnerparken side and so incidentally connect with Mjølnerparken residents (see Figure 5.36). This example of how some objects were placed to fit the social justice intent of the space, by the Grønne Park design team but this was not known by the subsequent Mjølnerparken design team, who considered the objects as movable parts.

Therefore, the spatial changes have led directly and indirectly to increased spatial segregation. The residents of Mjølnerparken now have a lesser experience to other users with e.g., the potential of *harm* at the intersection and the reduced quality of and access to the green leisure space and the remove of objects from their boundary (e.g., the hammock). There is no longer a shared place in which residents of Mjølnerparken and the wider residents of Copenhagen

can easily connect. It is notable that this area, Grønne Park experiences these problems when it is the area of Superkilen that is directly adjacent to the Mjølnerparken.

How the initial design process unexpectedly led to spatial injustice

An increasingly unjust landscape is a concerning result from a design process that intended the opposite. This section will examine how design practices, which intend to develop social justice, have instead led to injustice by materialising spatial segregation. It is notable that both design teams adopted the same overarching concept, 'opening up' as a way to be just. It is significant that this social idea, broadly to connect different people into new communities, is translated to the literal opening of space (e.g., sightlines, boundaries, etc). This episode will now trace how this charismatic but capricious principle, of opening up was interpreted to shape the consent materialised at Grønne Park.

In 'the fence' and 'the slope' sections, it was argued that the design team expressed an aim that the landscape would discharge greater *benefit* and *justice* through the interconnection of local Danish and non-Danish residents. This would be materialised through an overarching principle, to "open up [Grønne Park] along the sides", physically connecting the residents of Mjølnerparken and Heimdalsgade and also encouraging a flow through of people from wider Copenhagen.

The Grønne Park design team's rationale for this was twofold. First, as local residents themselves they had developed an understanding of the pre-design landscape as *harmful*, "No one dared actually going there … it was dark … it was risky … you couldn't view through it." 'Opening up' was intended to develop social j*ustice* by enabling individual *autonomy* – the user could *understand* more what was going on and so could *decide* how to move through Grønne Park.

Second, the Grønne Park design team's understanding of social *harm* influenced local interactions with an area. The team *believed* that harm was caused by the social dissonance between the residents of Mjølnerparken and those of wider Nørrebro, and *benefit* would be created by enabling the residents to conceive of themselves as a cohesive community. In response to this *belief,* the design team designed 'participation extreme' and expected this

process to generate a landscape which developed greater social *justice,* by reframing all local people as global citizens.

Participation extreme was examined in 'the slope' episode, which suggested that there were two concerns, understood by the design team, that informed how participation extreme shaped consent. The first was the re-framing of all local people as global citizens, shifting from a split between indigenously Danish and non-indigenous. The second was the design team's concern for maintaining what this study has interpreted as their own *autonomy*. They believed, based on prior experiences of participatory design, that within participatory design practices *autonomy* is finite and constrained their professional autonomy. So, in order to develop their own autonomy, they had to constrain local people's. In response to these concerns a participatory practice, 'participation extreme' was designed – local individuals were given the *constrained* and/or *coercive autonomy* to propose non-Danish objects: "the whole concept of the park is everything within the park is from elsewhere … it doesn't have a Danish connection … when you are actually in the realm of the park, you are in a different world" (2Loc3, personal communication, 29 September 2019). The design team decided if and where these objects would be in Grønne Park.

Thus, whilst 'opening up' the sides of Grønne Park was a primary spatial focus of the drawn designs, it was not employed as a guiding principle in the design of the participatory design practices. Therefore, whilst *what* was designed reflected the principle, *how* it was designed did not. As a result, the participatory design practices did not focus on or align the consent of the local landowner with the consent formed by the design team in developing the design decisions which they have then inscribed in the drawn designs. As argued in 'the fence' episode, a direct result to this approach was that this intended spatial 'opening up' was not translated into material form.

In terms of consent, the participation extreme disengaged with the democratic aim of participatory design practices, to support *authentic autonomy* of local people to shape local consent. Instead, it focused on constraining local people within the design team's own values and beliefs about participatory practices and about social cohesion. This dominance of the design team's consent and indeed their values and beliefs – or axiology, failed to materialise the opening up they sought. As described in 'the fence', local landowners said 'no' to Grønne

Park opening up their spaces and so opening them to the residents of Mjølnerparken. 'Participation extreme' did not create a seamless social connection, or spatial flow between Grønne Park and wider Copenhagen, but merely imbedded the design team's axiology about how space can express greater social justice into the place.

In addition, the design team's interpretation of 'opening up' was not shaped by the consent of local people, so not co-formed with them. There is also an uncomfortable conflation of people having global lifestyles, visiting a place on holiday and proposing an object, with people being from another place but now living in Denmark. This idea was the design team's, their intention was to signal that 'all people are the same'. This is simplistic when the local people were differently empowered by this place. The design process effectively sidestepped the divisions between different local people and this place, by declaring them all the same: global citizens. Unsurprisingly, this approach did not lead to justice.

This failure to materialise 'opening up' along the sides of Grønne Park had a particular impact on *the pathways*. The participatory design practices ensured that the design team's interpretation of opening up channelled resources into the global objects, reducing costs by maintaining much of the existing landscape's existing topography (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). This meant that ordinary design and construction practices, such as value engineering, gave priority to the needs of these objects (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). This raises the question of how the principles behind a design inform the value engineering process – given its role in balancing different ideas of how to do *good*, implicitly negotiate a new *justice*.

This absence of investment elsewhere in the landscape meant the Grønne Park implementation only made necessary changes to the landscape on which the objects sit. This meant they incidentally kept the existing pathways and some associated features discussed in this section, such as planting around the Mjølnerparken desire line. These pathways were not the subject of participatory design, leaving them vulnerable to re-design as the institutionalised identity of this landscape became focused on the global objects.

In addition, while the participatory design process didn't result in additional opening up along the sides of Grønne Park, the absences in the participatory design practices did result in the

connection autonomously created by residents of Mjølnerparken being maintained; the Mjølnerparken desire line. It is therefore reasonable to acknowledge that whilst the participatory design process did not re-shape consent between local residents as the client had intended, it did quietly maintain this pre-existing route, which those residents had *autonomy* materialised for their *benefit* and *justice.*

5.2.4.2 Findings from the interactions within the Mjølnerparken Design Programme materialising spatial segregation – the positionality of openness

This final part will now show how the interactions within the Mjølnerparken design programme, framed by the same language–an overarching principle of 'opening up'–influenced how consent was re-materialised between the residents of Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park in the form of a less *just* landscape (see section 5.1.3 Social History Redevelopment and Renewal). To understand these shifts, it is necessary to pay attention to how consent was being shaped for changes to the adjacent site of Mjølnerparken, before returning to Grønne Park to consider how that design programme interacted with Grønne Park design programme. This explains how each set of design practices becomes part of what is materialised and so remains in the landscape to interact with local actors and in any future design programmes.

Re-shaping consent, driven by the shift in social justice to be expressed at Mjølnerparken

The project to transform Mjølnerparken, through design, was *understood* by the design team to be in response to current social injustice. The design team were "changing Mjølnerparken… because there's this ghetto problem" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). This *understanding* of Mjølnerparken as a place that *harms* was augmented by the design team's site analysis. They concluded that it is a "different zone… everything tells you that you leave the city and go to somewhere else" (ibid).

This understanding of a housing area fractured from wider Copenhagen underscored the designs' overarching principle of 'opening up', which has been identified through the lens of

consent as it's central *design decision*, "the main issue is that it (Mjølnerparken) is opened up" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). This approach caused some concern to Bo-Vita, the social housing association running Mjølnerparken, who noted that some migrant residents were dealing with traumatic experiences, such as living in and leaving war torn areas. It is also contrary to the careful privacy that Mjølnerparken residents afford each other, by not traversing each other's courtyards. So, this overarching principle was based on a fundamental (mis)*understanding* held by the design team: that the *justice* they understood would come about through the social integration of Mjølnerparken residents that would follow spatial opening up to mobility routes. The design programme takes the social idea of opening up and transcribes it into a spatial expression of mobility and domestic surveillance. This is inscribed in the designs: to "force the green line of Superkilen into Mjølnerparken…[to] connect Mjølnerparken to the rest of Copenhagen" (2DesMj4, personal communication, 21 April 2019).

The Mjølnerparken design team's understanding was further formed through their *belief* that Mjølnerparken was, "empty and scary" and "you walk into the courtyard and it is just so depressing … it's like no one cares" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). Yet, the design team understood that 'opening up' would reduce this *harm* and *do good,* by introducing the "cares of the city". The design team's understanding of 'cares' is the physical and spatial way in which the places *do good,* and so discharges *beneficence*. Their understanding of the '*cares* of the city' was that it was spatialised and materialised in particular "small stories". The design team explained that one important small story was the presence of bicycles, indicating two reasons, "so you have all the eyes on the street", and because "in the future you have bicycles everywhere" countered the "empty and scary" experience (ibid).

The design team's *understanding* of how to develop *beneficence,* through 'forcing a green line' also meant that the intent to develop *justice* through "opening up" was not done as a pedestrian path or a road, but a cycleway (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). Furthermore, it was about non-Mjølnerparken residents moving through Mjølnerparken, not developing the respectful approach to privacy identified by residents. This is important as the existing pedestrian route, the Mjølnerparken desire line, was therefore not *valued* in the design team's development of *design decisions*. This is despite the Mjølnerparken

desire line being a local materialisation of local practices that opened up Mjølnerparken, by enabling care of each other in their blocks and connection to Tagensvej.

This absence of respect can be understood as *coercive,* excluding the local way of valuing this landscape and developing it to benefit them and balance spatial inequities. This illustrates how the design bypasses local people in how *justice* – and so consent – is being shaped and raises the question: whose consent were the designers developing and whose were they eroding?

Whose autonomy underscored this big move?

The Mjølnerparken design team understood their autonomy as deriving from their selection as designers by Bo-Vita, Mjølnerparken's social housing provider, due to them having developed a 'pattern language' from previous projects where they had successfully transformed social housing into more *just* places. They also considered how that *autonomy* worked in practice, what constrained and what enabled them. They, like the Grønne Park design team, reflected on participatory design practices, considering that the *autonomy* of local people presented a significant *constraint* or *coercive* influence on their own ability to practice, "the democratic design process can be very problematic because they [local people] think they know best … I'm forced to do it because no one listens" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019).

However, in the case of Mjølnerparken, the Mjølnerparken design team noted that this *autonomy* did not practically *constrain* their *decision-making,* noting it was "very, very hard to make them [Mjølnerparken residents] participate in the meeting" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). So in the terms of this study, the residents of Mjølnerparken did not constrain the design team's *autonomy* as their input was insignificant: "when you go to other places you can really meet … almost aggressive Danes…[it was the] opposite [at Mjølnerparken] the ones who come are extremely nice, very, very polite (ibid)." They identified two reasons that their approach to including local people in their design practice failed. Firstly, "they have so many other problems … they don't have the energy to try and influence their whole lives" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). Secondly, the residents of Mjølnerparken are, "not used to this democratic way of discussing

the process." Hence the *values and beliefs* held by the residents of Mjølnerparken's were absent, and so *coerced* away from the development of *design decisions.* As a result, the design was not *authentic* to these people of the place and the designs were not a spatial expression of their *values and beliefs.* Which raises the question of whose values and beliefs it did represent?

The lack of autonomy of Mjølnerparken residents within the Mjølnerparken's teams design process meant the design team's misunderstandings of Mjølnerparken dominated the development of decisions and so defined how to do good and discharge justice through these spatial changes. This was despite the design team having heard that, "they [Mjølnerparken residents] really love the place they live, they don't see it as a ghetto, that is something that comes from the outside." This meant that despite residents liking particular features, such as being able to "relax within their block un-surveilled", (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019), these features would not be retained because the design team considered that they were contrary to their understanding of 'opening up', which was used as a proxy for spatial justice. This was because "closed gardens" means "you have no eyes on the street", which "makes it difficult to walk through … these small routes in between are really kind of scary" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019).

The Mjølnerparken design team commented that the *beliefs* of local police supported this spatial expression of social justices, as the bicycle lane encouraged passive surveillance of Mjølnerparken residents by a predominantly ethnically Danish flow of bike riders. As we saw in the episode, 'the fence', the police were pre-occupied with the criminality of the residents of Mjølnerparken. This was unlike the design process for Grønne Park, where the Grønne Park design team, "actually never had contact with the police" (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). It is notable that this is another example of the Grønne Park design team excluding an actor (the police) whose autonomy would inform a definition of beneficence infused with fears or concerns about the residents of Mjølnerparken.

This can be concluded as a key feature of the Grønne Park participatory design process: to exclude from it those who were negative about Mjølnerparken residents. In contrast, the Mjølnerparken design team had the police as a key stakeholder, empowering the police's *autonomy*, which in turn contributes to an *understanding* that, "if you feel unsafe surrounded

by potential criminal use, then you want to be seen" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019), which informed the *development of design decisions*. This points to a key similarity between the two design processes, as both design teams filtered the input of stakeholders and local people according to the team's values and beliefs about the residents of Mjølnerparken. Neither included practices to enable a local negotiation of a shared set of values and beliefs about how to develop justice.

For whose benefit were these designs? A question of how justice is discharged

The design team described how a redeveloped Mjølnerparken would have: "Copenhagen pedestrian walks, we have Copenhagen lights, we have Copenhagen feelings…the same materials that you see everywhere else in Copenhagen. So if you're successful in this, you won't really notice when you are entering Mjølnerparken anymore. It's just another part of the city … it belongs" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). This reframing of Mjølnerparken to being a place of Copenhagen, can be considered in parallel to the Grønne Park design team's framing of Mjølnerparken as the home of migrants, triggering the idea of Nørrebro residents as having global lifestyles. In both cases Mjølnerparken residents are being 'opened up' to *benefit and justice* that will be discharged by them being considered as the same as others in the area. This raises a question of the limitation of framing as a kind of coercive force that spatialises an external idea of what good is, rather than responding to their actual lived conditions.

It is also notable that the wider Nørrebro residents had a different pre-existing autonomy. They were described by Bo-Vita as different to the residents of Mjølnerparken, being a "well-functioning middle class, upper middle class" who are attracted by, "having your ethnic greengrocer and you can go there and you can buy food from all over the world which you can't in other places … for a very good price" (2Loc1, personal communication, 13 February 2019). They concluded that, "talking about renovation, there has been already people who are interested in buying up here." So, the 'opening up' of Mjølnerparken to 'Copenhagen feelings' makes Mjølnerparken an attractive prospect for 'well-functioning' families. Therefore, these coercive framings had a further unplanned effect, which could be labelled as gentrifying.

The design team also noted the influence of state-level politics and in particular, how Mjølnerparken's re-design was a vehicle of immigration politics. One aspect of that was the 'Ghetto Policy', which gave the state the powers to relocate residents from social housing that fitted particular criteria, including a high percentage of immigrants (Stender & Bech-Danielsen, 2019). The design team discussed how "I've never been part of a project that was complicated with so many people", noting that, "in an election year there'll be new ideas coming in" (2DesMj4, personal communication, 21 April 2019) which would affect whether the work will continue to be funded, a role which this study would term *authorisation.* In response to this, the drawn designs changed their inscription of who *benefited* from the designs: "it was to be called … Bazaar Street…and then it was the election year and the different political party came into the power … changed it to 'High Street'…it's always a balance between how many women in hijabs" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). The lens of consent reveals how the design team used their autonomy to ensure their work continued, but in doing so re-directed its benefit towards indigenous Danes. These interactions show how the commercial interests of the design team used their *autonomy* to pivot the designs to shift whose *justice* the designs would develop.

How did an understanding that there was a "rusty connection" between Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park, lead to an expression of injustice at Grønne Park?

The lens of consent has highlighted Mjølnerparken design programme's principle of 'opening up', specifically how it discharged the *autonomy* of the police, state and designers*,* and *coerces* the values and beliefs of the residents of Mjølnerparken from the designs. This illustrates how the three moral duties are discharged in series; the designers' autonomy defines how to do good and reduce harm. The lack of explicit attention to negotiating the development of local justice led to how *justice* is expressed in the designs, and space*.* The final part of this Case Study will now explore how this proposal to open up led to the material changes described in the opening part of this section.

One key aspect in the development of designs was how the interpretation of opening up interacted with physical place based actors – various landscape elements – and so fulfils how it would shape consent. In particular, the question of where to 'force the green line' through

Mjølnerparken when there was a “rusty connection” (2DesMj4, personal communication, 21 April 2019) left by the Grønne Park design team, between Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park.

The Mjølnerparken design team described how they developed their *design decision* on the big spatial move to ‘force a green line’ through Mjølnerparken. In the terms of this study, they *understood* that there were *constraints;* “challenges along the green park that was already there and we couldn’t resolve [them] because of some of the things we weren’t allowed to do” (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). Each route through Mjølnerparken, between blocks, had its own constraint, including the electricity transformer box which was, “very expensive to move” and a municipal kindergarten, who did not agree to being moved. In contrast the client, Bo-Vita was happy to move the community house to Mimersparken. Bo-Vita described how Mimersparken was now the preferred park for residents of Mjølnerparken, due to a design process that the Mjølnerparken residents understood took greater cognisance of their needs, so for Bo-Vita moving the community house to Mimersparken made sense (2Loc1, personal communication, 13 February 2019). This resulted in the green line being planned to go between Block 1 and 2.

The consequence of this location was that the cycleway on Grønne Park needed to move to connect to this new ‘green line’ through Mjølnerparken. The design team achieved this by moving Nørrebroruten across the landscape, from the Heimdalsgade to Mjølnerparken side - so the “walking path was then upgraded to become a bike pass” (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). This meant that “early in the process we had this difference in the level … so [we added] a retaining wall” (2DesMj2, personal communication, 7 February 2019). The Grønne Park design team noted that this move contradicted their understanding of opening up, saying that they were “quite sad because…in the beginning of the project it was all about opening it up, making it very accessible, also for security reasons. So not actually having these kinds of boundaries…[instead] it was a slope” (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). The Grønne Park team considered that the recent changes by the Mjølnerparken design team were “not really full agreed … specifically these kinds of concrete walls” (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019) referring to the retaining walls.

The Mjølnerparken design team noted collateral problems as well but saw them as secondary to the big moves. This resulted in a "leftover area" (2DesMj2, personal communication, 7 February 2019), referring to the space below the lower retaining wall where the Mjølnerparken desire line crosses. Another Mjølnerparken design team member admitted that the result was the erosion of privacy of Mjølnerparken residents as "people [cycling] look straight into your apartment. You don't have much privacy" but that the "connection down here is, it's very difficult. A lot of stuff going on that is kind of almost impossible to solve" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019).

The introduction of the police into the Mjølnerparken design process led to their influence on Grønne Park's changes. When moving Nørrebroruten the mound at the Tagensvej end of Grønne Park was reduced, "because of the Police … hey can't see through it … [and] found it challenging" (2DesMj1, personal communication, 23 February 2019). This mound pre-dates Grønne Park, "this bit was a bit more quiet, of course there was a big traffic sound from the road, that's why we initially had a big hill right here to kind of take some of the sound" (2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019). By moving the mound, the green leisure area provides less *benefit* to those that use it and so discourages use. The movement of the mound can also be understood to have triggered *harm* in other ways. The contractors who did the re-profiling of the green area were appointed for their skill at roading, as the focus of the project was the cycleways. Soft landscape requires different skills "the green thing is normally things that we have a sub-contractor [for]" (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019), but there was not sufficient budget to do this because of the costs of reprofiling Grønne Park, reducing the mound and shifting Nørrebroruten. Under the ground they found a lot of rubbish, that predated Grønne Park. This included large items including bicycles which were buried under the ground, so "a lot of soil we had to remove" (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019).

As a result of recent reprofiling, "it gets very dry" on the green leisure area and in "summer it was very dry…it was eight trees which died" (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019). As the Mjølnerparken team understood that "the main task was to reuse all the elements" (2DesMj4, personal communication, 21 April 2019), the trees were replaced – as objects. This reflects the Mjølnerparken design team's understanding of Grønne Park as a collection of objects, an understanding derived directly from meetings with the Grønne Park

design team. The Mjølnerparken design team interpreted this focus on objects quantitively, “there should be the same number of trees afterwards” (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019). This focus on the number of trees meant “there was put trees in there” only to discover that “this was a no-go area for trees” (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019). As discussed earlier in this section, the movement of Nørrebroruten led to the old route becoming a pedestrian desire line running close to the Heimdalsgade fence line. The contractors commented how, “they used to go this way and [so] whole summer they went like this … we have big problems with grass. So, we have to renew all this … we started to make a new area here with grass, again!” (2DesMj3, personal communication, 16 March 2019).

In summary, this section has reflected how through the consideration of different duties and how they are discharged, through the development and delivery of the processes of consent, it is possible to consider the social impact of how design is undertaken. Specifically, what is materialised and indeed future approaches to design. The influence of the order of the moral duties of consent is critical. Precedence leads to particular actors’ values and beliefs about beneficence being codified in the design process and others being coerced from it. When materialised, these values and beliefs about how to do good stimulate a new negotiation of justice between local users, human and material. This negotiation is biased towards those who can understand the social beneficence encoded in the designs. Hence the participatory design process introduced to this landscape to develop greater equity for residents of Mjølnerparken, has instead shaped consent for the development of an increasingly segregated landscape.

Synopsis, with Consent

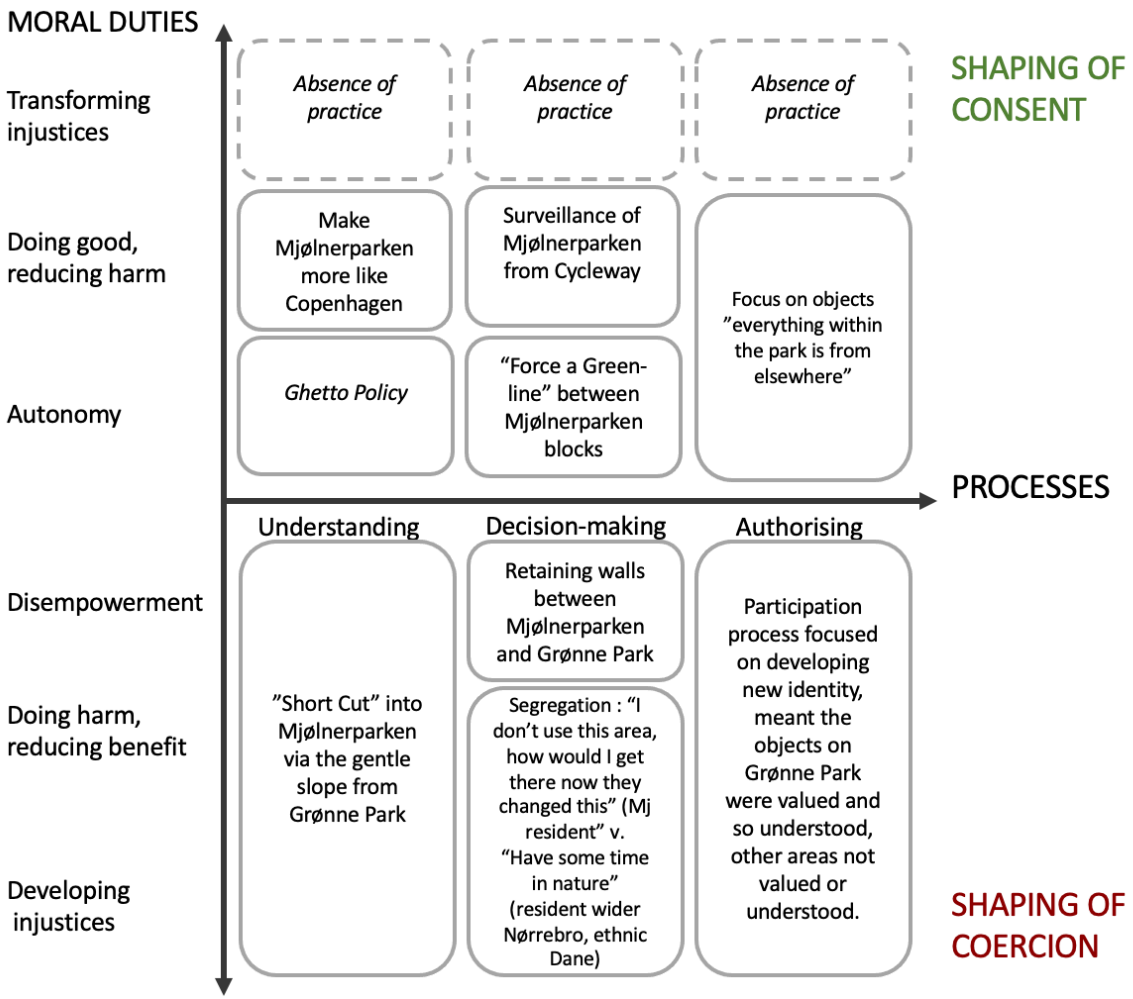

Figure 5.38 The Intersection, interpreted using The Framework of Informed Consent

This framework shows (Figure 5.38) how the participation process informed the landscape's identity: so, the global objects were understood as doing good here, but the rest was not. This identity set the parameters for what was authorised here. Design work on the adjacent site of Mjølnerparken focused on retaining the number of objects, whilst designing within the constrained understanding of Mjølnerparken residents. This understanding came from the Ghetto Policy. Its intent was to make Mjølnerparken more like the rest of Copenhagen in order to improve the social outcomes of its residents. This included connecting it into mobility networks – so they decided to introduce a cycleway to connect and surveil Mjølnerparken residents. To achieve this, they disrupted existing connections between Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park, including the short cut desire line and adding retaining walls to support the cycleways. These changes increased the segregation of the residents of Mjølnerparken, from

Grønne Park. Other local people could access Grønne Park from Tagensvej and 'have some time in nature'.

5.3 Key Findings

Case Study 2, Grønne Park was designed in response to a municipal brief with an explicit social aim to improve the relationship between residents of Mjølnerparken and wider Copenhagen and Denmark and to improve the lives of the residents of Mjølnerparken. The Case Study fieldwork focused on how Grønne Park had changed in form and layout in the 6 years after it opened in 2012/13 and investigated those changes in relation to the initial social aims, through a lens of informed consent.

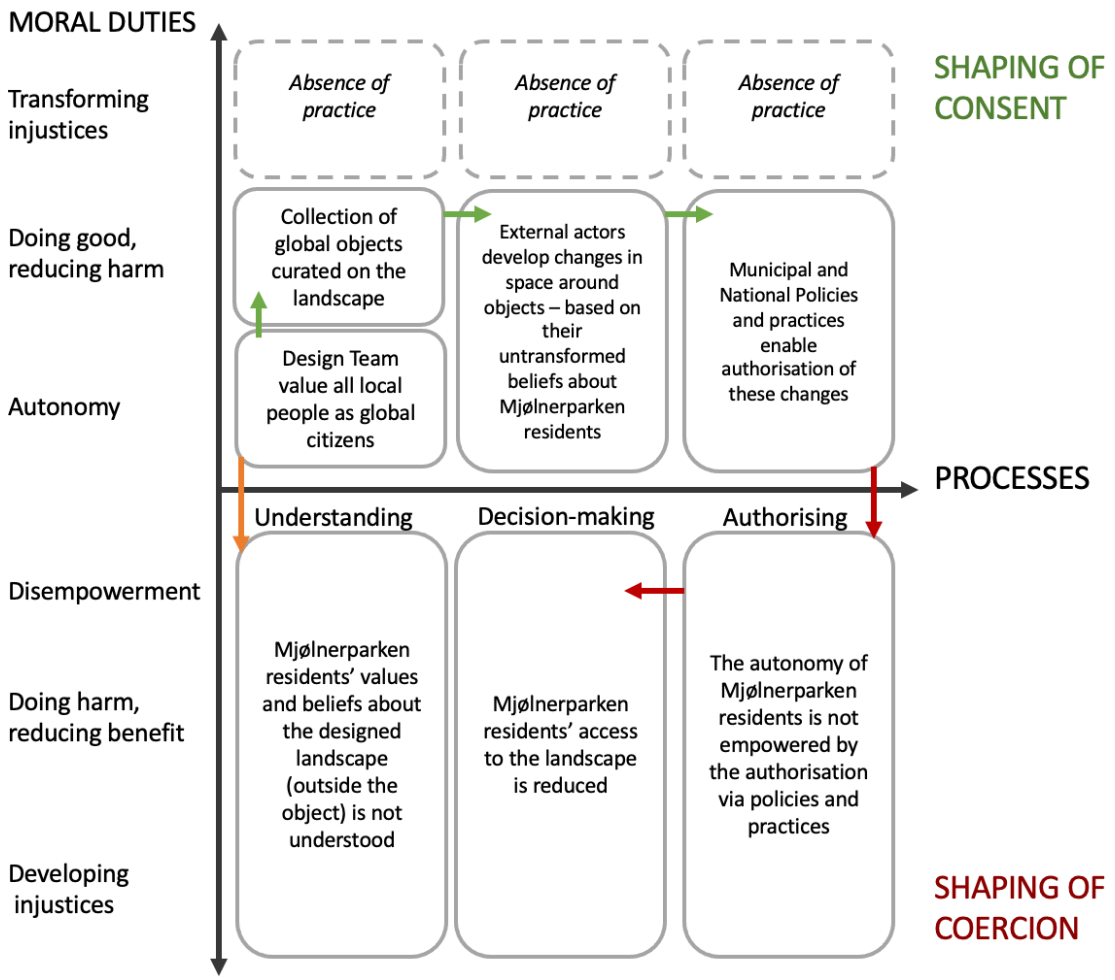

Figure 5.39 Case 2, Grønne Park, interpreted using *The Framework of Informed Consent* (Key: green = go, red = stop, amber = absent from design development)

Figure 5.39 starts by recognising how the way that Grønne Park has been understood since it opened has influenced the subsequent changes. That understanding was a direct result of the participatory design process in which the design team framed all local people as global citizens. They did this with the belief, that *to do good and reduce harm,* local people need to be conceptualised as the same and so should be treated the same by the design team. The design team also wanted to constrain the influence of local people on their professional process, to prevent them from disrupting that process. The result was a participation process that was focused on a discrete opportunity for local people to identify a 'good thing'. The local people were asked to propose a global object that they wanted included in the design of the place. Objects proposed by individuals or small pre-existing groups of local people were then reviewed, selected and curated by the design team. So local people were working with people they already knew, in parallel with others who already knew each other. To emphasise, the participatory process was designed so local interactions with both the design team and with each other did not disrupt the design process from fulfilling its intent for social change.

Throughout the municipal participatory process prior to design and subsequent municipal consultation, there was also a strong local concern to increase the amount and quality of local green space. This was due to Nørrebro having less green than elsewhere in Copenhagen and a local recognition that green space contributes to individual and social well-being. However, once the newly designed and built place was opened, the media, researchers and professional interpretation focused on the collection of global objects. These objects became how the place was understood at a municipal scale and above: the objects became a proxy for its identity. So, how the wider place is valued locally as a green space is absent. It is not understood by people from wider Copenhagen, including the municipal maintenance team, graffiti artists, øldrikkers – and the design team working more recently on refurbishing Mjølnerparken.

The focus of the design team on these global objects achieving the place's social aims also meant the life of the slopes and edges (including both human interactions and non-human planting) of the wider place were not well resolved and so are hard to care for. External actors take on responsibility for caring for these parts of the place and intervene with their own values and beliefs, and then influence a wider network of municipal and state supporters in order to make their own changes. These changes were predicated on a negative understanding of the

residents of Mjølnerparken, held both by the actors making the change and through the municipal and national policies and practices which authorised the changes.

The following key findings will focus on why, despite the design team's intent, the participatory designed place did not empower with greater equity the autonomy of residents of Mjølnerparken. The Grønne Park case suggests that the place that is an outcome of the 'participatory' process creates greater inequity of access for residents of Mjølnerparken than before it opened. Spatial and social segregation of Mjølnerparken residents is worse at Grønne Park than prior to the participatory landscape design process. Yet the landscape design is seen by many as doing *more good* that it was before its design. So, the residents of Mjølnerparken have less access to something others believe to be better, which further exaggerates the inequity between Mjølnerparken residents and other local people. It is particularly notable that the participatory design process has instead empowered the autonomy of a series of middle aged ethnically Danish men, who are able to engage with and make changes to Grønne Park, and there some indications that this is fuelling wider gentrification of the area, further worsening the inequity. Ironically, the very people whose influence the design team sought to disrupt, by introducing 'Participation Extreme'.

It is notable that this diagram (Figure 5.39) showing a Framework of Informed Consent connects the initial participatory design process, with interactions with the designed landscape. This moves away from the focus of existing literature examined in the Theoretical Framework: that participation is mainly dealt with as a social procedure that configures a relationship between the design professional and local people via, for example, workshops and interviews. Instead, this indicates a focus on the relationships between design professionals intervening in and shifting the relationships between local people and their place. Making the link explicit, between *how* to design, with *what* is designed, is a key achievement of this study, and underpins the key findings below.

Figure 5.39 helps to explain the three key, sequential findings from this Case Study about how the participatory design process led to problematic interactions where more benefit was discharged to the ethnically Danish residents through their interactions with the place, so exasperating the extant inequity:

1. The design team were concerned that some local people would dominate the residents of Mjølnerparken and that these local people would disrupt their professional autonomy, and so their ability to design how to do good in this place. In response to this concern, the design team configured the participatory design process so only the design team's own values and beliefs were empowered.
2. The empowerment of professional design autonomy meant that there was no opportunity in the participatory process for Mjølnerparken residents to use their values and beliefs to re-negotiate, with other residents and stakeholders, how the place supported their equity. Yet the aim of the place changes was to improve their lives.
3. The participatory process did not have a 'site', as it focused locals on proposing objects to the design team, leaving the selection and locating of those objects to the design team. The foregrounding of a collection of objects led to unforeseen consequences, as the 'background' landscape features which were not included in the participatory process became cared for by actors with negative views of the residents of Mjølnerparken. This has fuelled spatial segregation, alienating behaviours and gentrification.

1. *The design team were concerned that ethnically Danish residents of Nørrebro would dominate the residents of Mjølnerparken and disrupt their professional autonomy, and so their ability to design how to do good in this place. In response to this concern, the design team configured the participatory design process so only the design team's own values and beliefs were empowered.*

This first finding is about the interactions during the Grønne Park participatory design process. Later findings will explain its impact on the contemporary place. The finding focuses on the novel participatory process that was developed by the design team to mitigate their own concerns about the municipal process. To emphasise, these concerns were not based or nuanced by concerns raised by local people, but on past experiences of the design team from other projects.

The design team named their novel process, 'Participation Extreme'. They had two motivations for developing Participation Extreme. First, a concern about who was empowered by current methods – particularly public meetings. In their experience public meetings were attended by older ethnically Danish men. But the social aims of the participatory design process gave primary attention to the non-white people of Mjølnerparken. Second, and perhaps more strongly stated by the design team, the design team had concerns about how the municipal participation process inhibited their professional design process. Their experience was that it constrained their ability to design well.

The episodes show how 'Participation Extreme' focused on constraining the interactions of local people in three ways: with each other, with the design team and with the place. These three ways will now be explained.

First, local people worked in parallel, not together. They proposed global objects as individuals or as an established local group (e.g., Line Dancing group). This prevented local people from dominating each other, but also removed the chance to build relationships and negotiate new understandings of each other. Second, the objects were proposed by local people to the design team, who then selected them. The design team curated what and where objects were placed on the place. The design team described how they intended that the objects would talk to each other (1Des1, personal communication, 1 August 2018; 2DesGP2, personal communication, 3 May 2019; BIG et al., 2009). In practice, the objects didn't converse, but were perceived by landscape users and subsequent design teams, as a collection. The nature of collections is that they have a core principle that defines what can be in the collection – and in this one that principle was to be not-Danish. This eroded each object's specific place-based identity and instead created a collection focusing on being 'other' than Danish, so providing for the Nørrebro creative classes a sought-after experience of ethnic diversity. By selecting the objects and curating them, the design team ensured it was this Nørrebro understanding that was used to decide what good was done here. Third, this constraint is best described as an absence from the process. The experiential relationship between local people and the place (including those of primary concerns in the brief; the residents of Mjølnerparken) was absent from Participation Extreme, including how they had already adapted this place (e.g., desire paths). This was despite a local campaign to improve local well-being by developing a green park. Nørrebro had been identified as having insufficient green space and less than other suburbs (2DesGP1,

personal communication, 19 January 2019), but the shortfall was addressed in metric rather than experiential terms, so they created a green 'carpet' and named it the Green Park, but did not design for the desired green park experience or establish that as its identity – so that principle could be sustained by subsequent design teams.

Overall, Participation Extreme was an explicit approach to participation which aimed to centre design autonomy in the overall participatory design process. But within the participatory procedures there was a task, selecting an object from outside Denmark, that centred the empowerment of the residents of Mjølnerparken. It was the latter which was communicated publicly – and the episodes showed how it became the identity of the place.

The dominant autonomy of the design team has remained normative in the media and the existing literature on Grønne Park. But this case investigation has shown its influence. To recap, the design team used their own personal experience, as long-term residents of Nørrebro, to guide the understanding that shaped the design decisions. This indicates a utility to thinking with consent, as attention is given to the design team's side of the consent equation, and so their roles in forming consent. By thinking with consent, the professional participatory design process defined a role for Mjølnerparken residents that was limited to the selection of objects, not the design of space, or indeed those aspects that are associated with human relationships with place.

This finding, coupled with the lens of consent questions the effectiveness, in a participatory design process, of shaping consent by using only the design team's values and beliefs about a local area and about different local people. The episodes show how the design team believed that they could use their understanding of this place and how the place should be valued to shape consent, i.e., the design team defined A (where we are now) and B (where we want to go). They used these understandings to improve the lives of Mjølnerparken residents by designing a change in identity for this place. Their decision was to introduce a collection of international objects to the place, to empower the autonomy of people of all nations here. However, the episodes revealed that this was not achieved. Furthermore, whilst the participatory design process acted as a way of structuring interactions in the short term, it did not sustain the design team's values and beliefs. Once open, other people's values and beliefs underpinned subsequent changes to the place – but not for the residents of Mjølnerparken.

The design of this space did not re-balance equity in their favour. This finding can be explored further using the literature on informed consent, in particular the concept of authentic consent. This concept is intended to support professionals to recognise and structure interactions so that the people giving consent have integrated it with their own values and beliefs, on the basis that this is how consent is 'authentic' and so sustained. It implicitly signals that consent based on the professionals' values and beliefs is limited, and so limits the transformation their professional processes can achieve.

2. *The participatory design process did not empower the residents of Mjølnerparken to negotiate greater equity in their relationship to this place. This was because the participatory design process did not engage with the constellation of autonomies that already existed here.*

One clear finding from this study was that since the final drawn designs were presented to local people in 2010, the place is continuing to be changed by both professionals and by ethnically Danish local people. To emphasise, none of those changes were done by residents of Mjølnerparken. This finding will summarise why this is the case and then raise questions about how to do participatory design.

Each episode reported in the results Chapter described different ways to lever changes to the place and identified why the residents of Mjølnerparken were not empowered by these mechanisms. 'The white wall' identified that middle aged white men had the autonomy to graffiti a wall without being criminalised. In contrast, Mjølnerparken residents would not graffiti here as they feared criminalisation. Similarly, the øldrikkers (beer drinkers) in 'the fence' sustain their anti-social occupation of a liminal area of Grønne Park, including breaking in through the back of a building on the adjacent site. This occupation was made possible when the design for this area had been disrupted, because the owners of the adjacent site feared opening a more direct physical connection to the residents of Mjølnerparken. They considered them a potential threat, although crime statistics were not high enough to contribute to the classing as a Ghetto. It is notable that both the graffiti artist and øldrikkers' autonomy on the

place are empowered because the police focused their attention on the area of Grønne Park closest to Mjølnerparken, some distance from the white wall and the adjacent fenceline.

In 'the slope', the changes to a slope are contracted by the municipality to an ethnically Danish volunteer man who works as a gardener. It is notable that the focus of change is not on the 'global' objects which inform the identity of this place as communicated via the public and design profession media. The Co-Creation contract given to the gardener is part of a wider policy, the Co-Creation Policy, which was a result of past contests between highly educated, creative residents of the Copenhagen suburb of Nørrebro. Whilst both Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park do lie along the boundary of Nørrebro with Nordvest, it is not here that these Nørrebro residents are located. Nørrebro residents wanted their autonomy to be formally empowered to change their area, in ways they understood as good and the Co-Creation Policy empowered them to do this. It is interesting that this policy formalised practices as a social good that had previously been problematic for the municipality. However, in this episode the empowerment of one person's idea of social good erodes the autonomy of others: children from Mjølnerparken. As part of his work, the gardener erects a 'children's fence', as a barrier to children, predominately to discourage children running between Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park.

'The intersection' shows how changes to Grønne Park are being made to add a new cycle route through Mjølnerparken. This episode shows how professionals from the state, the municipality and the designers of Mjølnerparken were empowered to make changes which were underscored by their negative values and beliefs about the residents of Mjølnerparken. The result was a more segregated place, in particular a difficult pedestrian connection between Mjølnerparken and Grønne Park, and reduced access for Mjølnerparken residents to the benefits of both green space and social mixing with people from other parts of Nordvest and Nørrebro.

This summary of episodes illustrates how 'Participation Extreme' shaped consent by constraining the autonomy of local residents. It did not empower the existing constellation of autonomies at Grønne Park to define new ideas of how to do good and reduce harm, and then to negotiate greater equity with all residents, for the residents of Mjølnerparken, and so inscribe greater equity in the designs. Once the place was open, the 'designed' relationship

with Grønne Park was disrupted. This disruption was a result of different 'local' people, all ethnically Danish, having diverse ideas of how to do good and inscribing those in the place. Their autonomies to make these changes to the place were empowered and structured by a range of mechanisms described above. Implicit in those mechanisms and in the ethnically Danish actors, were ideas that excluded the migrant cultures of the residents of Mjølnerparken. These findings support an existing critique about how participation is an insufficient concept and approach, to support how to democratise places (Calderon, 2019; Flyvberg, 1998), arguing that the use of normative and ideal processes does not take account of the diverse sources of empowerment in a place, and the contingent nature of real-life design processes and of the subsequent life of places.

As Finding 1 reveals, 'Participation Extreme' acted as a discrete participatory process to support the designers' autonomy, augmented by the significant professional and public regard that this design team is held in, and indeed the high regard for the design profession in Denmark. The design teams' autonomy was underscored by their values and beliefs about this place and its future, which were derived from their personal experiences as local residents. This is a curious case of the dual identity of the design team: their autonomy was empowered by both being residents of Nørrebro and by their international reputation. However, design autonomy was only empowered at Grønne Park for the duration of the design process and within the site boundaries. It was empowered to draw designs and to structure the interactions between and with local people, but not to structure interactions between people and the place after Grønne Park opened. Therefore, the episodes illustrate the limitation of this normative participatory design approach. Indeed, the gap between design intent and management practices have been a long-standing focus of critique in the discipline but remains in many projects (Hoddinott, 2019). An implication is that participatory design processes need to rethink how longer term interactions are structured and the provisional nature of the designed place. Whilst this study is primarily focused on the utility of consent in design participation practice, it is important to point out that this particular concern is also fundamental to participatory studies in other disciplines (Mohan & Hickey, 2004). Hence whilst informed consent provides a way to talk about and identify problems in design participation, there is still untapped potential in developing approaches and methods to address the translation of design-based consent into place management.

Informed consent has both helped define this finding and chart an alternative way forward. Already this study has examined the influence of whose values and beliefs are empowered by the participatory design process. But now there is an additional question which arises from charting informed consent; how does participatory design shift from using professional values and beliefs in defining how 'to do good here', to instead structuring a locally authentic process that aims to not only give primary attention to certain locals 'good', but also to negotiate greater equity with locals with less desirable ideas of doing good, both during and beyond the participatory design process? This is a useful question, but also a challenging one, as the design team described how Participation Extreme came about precisely because they had concerns about how they could maintain their design autonomy whilst structuring and navigating interactions between and with local people.

3. *The participatory process did not have a 'site' as it focused locals on proposing global objects. The focus on objects led to unforeseen consequences, as the 'background' landscape features became cared for by actors with negative views of the residents of Mjølnerparken. This has fuelled spatial segregation, alienating behaviours, and gentrification.*

The final finding is a further perspective on the implications of looking with a lens of consent at the role of site in participatory design. This section will explore how existing relationships to the place interacted with site practices to limit the consent that was formed for the designs, which then disrupted that consent once the designed landscape was opened to the public. This has implications for how site practices relate to place.

How consent was shaped for Grønne Park in the participatory design process can be understood through how it structured interactions with three different spaces. The first two are within what Kahn and Burns (2021) define as within the design team's 'area of control', which is often (and is here) the normative definition of site. These are the objects and the 'carpet' on which the objects sat. The last is how consent was shaped for the spaces adjacent to the site boundaries, which this study has shown are both areas of influence and areas of effect.

Participation Extreme structured interactions so that local people focused on proposing objects that they were attached to in quite different ways, but that were given the same weight in the resultant place. This ranged from migrants with deep familial attachment to the soil in their war-torn home, to a nice pavilion from an ethnically Danish Nørrebro residents' holiday (2DesGP1, personal communication, 19 January 2019). The objects were transposed here. The design team curated the objects as a collection on a place to represent the identity of Nørrebro as hip and diverse, in contrast to the perceived homogeneity and conformity of wider Denmark. These objects also provided facilities to the place, such as lighting, benches, swings and manhole covers. The result is that the sites from which the objects originated and that gave them meaning for local people are not the focus here; it is more so the idea of them being from elsewhere than a serious focus on their particular origin, so the qualities of that original, proposing local autonomy is absent. This is supported by participant interviews during the field study, where visitors to Grønne Park were not aware why local people selected the objects and where the objects had come from. The objects now become a collection of elements extending the 'area of influence' of Nørrebro's identity, into the Grønne Park. So, these objects do not speak to their origin but show Nørrebro's identity; as proud to be diverse and so distinct to the ethnically Danish identity of wider Copenhagen. The idea of 'migration' is not substantially explored by the design process, nor did it come from the residents of Mjølnerparken. Instead, the residents of Mjølnerparken are 'othered' by the design team. To explain, the residents in Mjølnerparken were defined prior to design as 'other' or different (as migrants) to the identity of the local members of the design team (who considered themselves ethnically Danish). The designs retain the 'othering' of these residents, as 'migrants' rather than 'ethnic Danes', but seeks to make this difference popular and positive. The implications of migration to real Mjølnerparken residents are absent from this place – what is it to be the child of immigrants from Somalia or to have recently arrived from Syria or Afghanistan? Therefore, the newly created 'site' of the objects is focused not on Mjølnerparken, but on the interaction between the (diverse) suburban and (ethnically Danish) urban scale. To repeat, this intent was not introduced by local people, but by the design team, who had strong personal connections to Nørrebro – so the site can be understood as empowered by and empowering of design autonomy. The lack of a more grounded and defined Grønne Park site is confirmed in the later movement of objects around the site and the replacement of trees by the Mjølnerparken design team. The fragmented sites of the objects are easily fractured by later dominant actors

to support how they spatially negotiate consent to further segregate the residents of Mjølnerparken. Curiously, the objects continue to be displaced and so migrated around the site. An unintentional and sobering metaphor for the lives of Mjølnerparken residents; classed as ghetto residents in an area that is being made more attractive and so facing the possibility of being separated from family members and their social networks and being removed to elsewhere.

The backgrounding of the Grønne Park as a carpet on which objects are displayed, meant this surface (and its non-surface like attributes) were absent from the participatory process. Earlier findings have identified how this absence empowered the autonomy of those who made the subsequent changes to its levels and vegetation – and ultimately the access of different groups of residents. Those changes were predicated on inaccurate, namely absent or negative, understandings of the residents of Mjølnerparken, as the 'carpet' site was absent from the identity developed through the participatory design process. This absence was key to the place becoming increasingly segregated. These findings further the existing scholarship, on the disruptive role of local people by noticing how this disruption relates to spatial consent of the designed landscape, and how that spatial consent is shaped by the procedural consent discharged by the participatory design process, (Arnstein, 1969; Calderon, 2019; Carr, 2012; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Richardson & Connelly, 2005).

The uneven process of empowerment extended to areas adjacent to the boundaries of Grønne Park. Different adjacent sites were empowered differently. Heimdalsgade's autonomy to say no to a pathway was empowered by ownership of the adjoining buildings by ethnically Danish people, who had a negative view of the residents of Mjølnerparken and prevented the removal of the fence. Mjølnerparken's autonomy to implement changes to Grønne Park was curtailed by institutional actors, who empowered an ethnically Danish design team who in turn decided that the best way to do good and reduce harm was to extend Nørrebro. This contrast not only illustrates the very different ways that Mjølnerparken residents of social housing and ethnically Danish owners were empowered, but also indicates a limitation to how participatory design shaped consent. The participatory design process did not account for the existing local autonomies and instead sought to introduce a way of temporarily structuring interactions.

It is also notable that the focus of the drawn designs was on horizontal or aerial views of Grønne Park; the placement of objects, a view down on a carpet and the boundary lines. This augmented how consent was shaped, as described above. For instance, the verticality of the slopes, fences and walls were key in disrupting the participatorily designed place.

This Case Study establishes how the participatory design practices defined what human relationships to objects and space are accounted for in the design process. These interactions have shown how participatory design enables and limits the consent that is shaped. The Theoretical Framework noted how participatory design is often dealt with in terms of methods of participation, the social interactions (methods and procedures) that connect local people to design teams (Pena et al., 2017; Sanoff, 1984; Wates, 2014). This study of consent deliberately countered this by adopting a methodology that included attention to non-human actors. This has been useful, as it has identified how and what is designed are inextricably linked, both through participation processes and through wider interactions within the design process and beyond. This therefore, pinpoints a concern for all design processes, participatory or not; that existing local relationships to a place are an influential actor in what is designed and in how and if the designed intent is sustained.

In addition, to the concern with the non-human, there is clarity that the design team's normative treatment of their own values and beliefs coupled with the definition of, and practices relating to site, empowered Nørrebro values. This meant that Grønne Park supported further empowerment of the ethnically Danish residents of Nørrebro. Key informants in this study and the study's wider findings note the limitations of this approach, as more ethnically Danish residents are now planning to move into the previously undesirable Mjølnerparken flats as a result of the proposed (and controversial, now suspended subject to legal challenge) sale of blocks to a private developer (OHCHR, 2020). This finding signals the need for design teams to be more aware of how their practices can lead to displacement of residents. This tendency is well documented in the scholarship on spatial justice, including the U.S spatial justice work much of which is focused on race, the Aotearoa work on de-colonialising cities and the European work on landscape democracy. One of the key points this literature makes, is that design practices need to find ways to give primary attention to those they seek to benefit (Griffin et al., 2014, 2015, 2020; Griffin & Weimer, 2020; Horrigan & Bose, 2018; Kiddle, 2018; Makhzoumi et al., 2011; Macfarlane, A. & Macfarlane, S.; Ngata, 2019). This study has gone

beyond the normal separation of what was designed (global objects) and how it was designed (participation extreme), by connecting how (procedural consent) and what was designed (spatial consent). It is determined that the design team's use of 'site' did not, as it had appeared, give primacy to those it sought to benefit; the residents' of Mjølnerparken. So, their local dimensions, understandings and experiences of place were not explicitly or sufficiently considered by either the design process or the participatory process. This limited how consent was shaped for the designed place; a result was a site which shaped consent for later undesigned changes. These changes were empowered by the design team's values and beliefs being both dominant and normative.

5.4 Questions raised by Case Study 2, Grønne Park, for practice and applied research

This section identifies specific applied concerns raised by each episode, about site practices (as the process of inquiry) and design practices (to *signify* the *course of action*). These concerns are pivoted into questions (Table 5.1) to show how the findings from the *Framework of Informed Consent* opens questions that can guide the procedures of practice and applied research to recognise the local relationship to place. These questions are provided here in preparation for subsequent Chapters.

Table 5.1 Questions raised by Case Study 2, Grønne Park, for practice and applied research

Controversial site practice in the cases	Question raised for future sites/places
Case 2, Grønne Park	
Episode 1: The White Wall Site practices did not take sufficient account of the differing autonomies of different local people. Therefore, they proposed a feature which the target group cannot easily use.	• How can site practices encourage design teams to explore, with local people, the likely interactions with different landscape elements? • How can drawings show the different local relationships to place, and how they interact?
Episode 2: The Slope Design drawings did not communicate the value of the whole site but focused on sub-sites that communicated their big idea. As a result, elements of the landscape were changed in a way that effected the local relationship to place.	• How can design drawings communicate to users the proposed local relationship to place, rather than solely prepare for construction?
Episode 3: The Fence Site practices do not adequately consider the boundary qualities inherent in the local relationships to place.	• How can site practices explore the local qualities of boundaries, and consider how (and if) to shift them? • How can design drawings transform the injustice of well-established stereotypes? • How can site practices take account of different relationships to place (e.g., ownership vs. renting) in a way that develops justice? • How can design drawings depict the different autonomies that (e.g., owners and renters) have over a site?
Episode 4: The Intersection Site practices and design drawings do not adequately consider informal mobility features between the site and the wider place e.g., desire lines. Site practices do not adequately consider past uses of the place, and so what is now under the ground.	• How can site practices explore existing informal mobility between sites? • How can design drawings capture informal local mobility? • How can the site consider the past relationships to place, and how it is now inherent in the site – including under the ground? • How can design drawings show the development of the local relationship to place, human and non-human – including remnants of the past, and shifts to e.g., elements going under the ground?

Chapter 6 Discussion

Chapters 4 and 5, Findings used the *Framework of Informed Consent* to report, analyse and interpret interactions in two cases of participatory design. The substantive findings were presented as seven 'episodes', each of which included a diagram that expressed how consent was shaped during the interactions that were identified and reported. A summary diagram of findings was then developed for each Case Study. In this Chapter, these two case summary diagrams are presented together (Figure 6.1) and critically compared to generate three synthetic insights about the way informed consent shapes, and is shaped by, the participatory design process (Table 6.2).

The three insights relate to the three *domains* in the *grammar of consent*, that is, *who* (section 6.2) consents *to whom* (section 6.3) to do what *course of action* (section 6.4). The comparison of the Cases reveals how informed consent is enabled or limited by the participatory design process. I will then discuss those insights in the light of the theoretical sources and framework established in Chapter 2 and identify ways that participatory design practice both limits and enables the shaping of informed consent.

6.1 Comparison of Case Studies

The summary findings diagrams for each Case Study (Figure 6.1) show how consent was shaped. They follow the ideas (or frame) developed by a process (e.g., understanding) to discharge (or not) a moral duty (e.g., beneficence) during participatory design. These ideas then influenced subsequent processes (and so sequential duties being discharged). The lower half of the diagrams show how the inverse of consent, coercion, was shaped during the process. The questions presented in Table 6.1 were used to critically compare these case summary diagrams and generate three key cross case insights. These questions were developed through the iterative, grounded analysis of the cases.

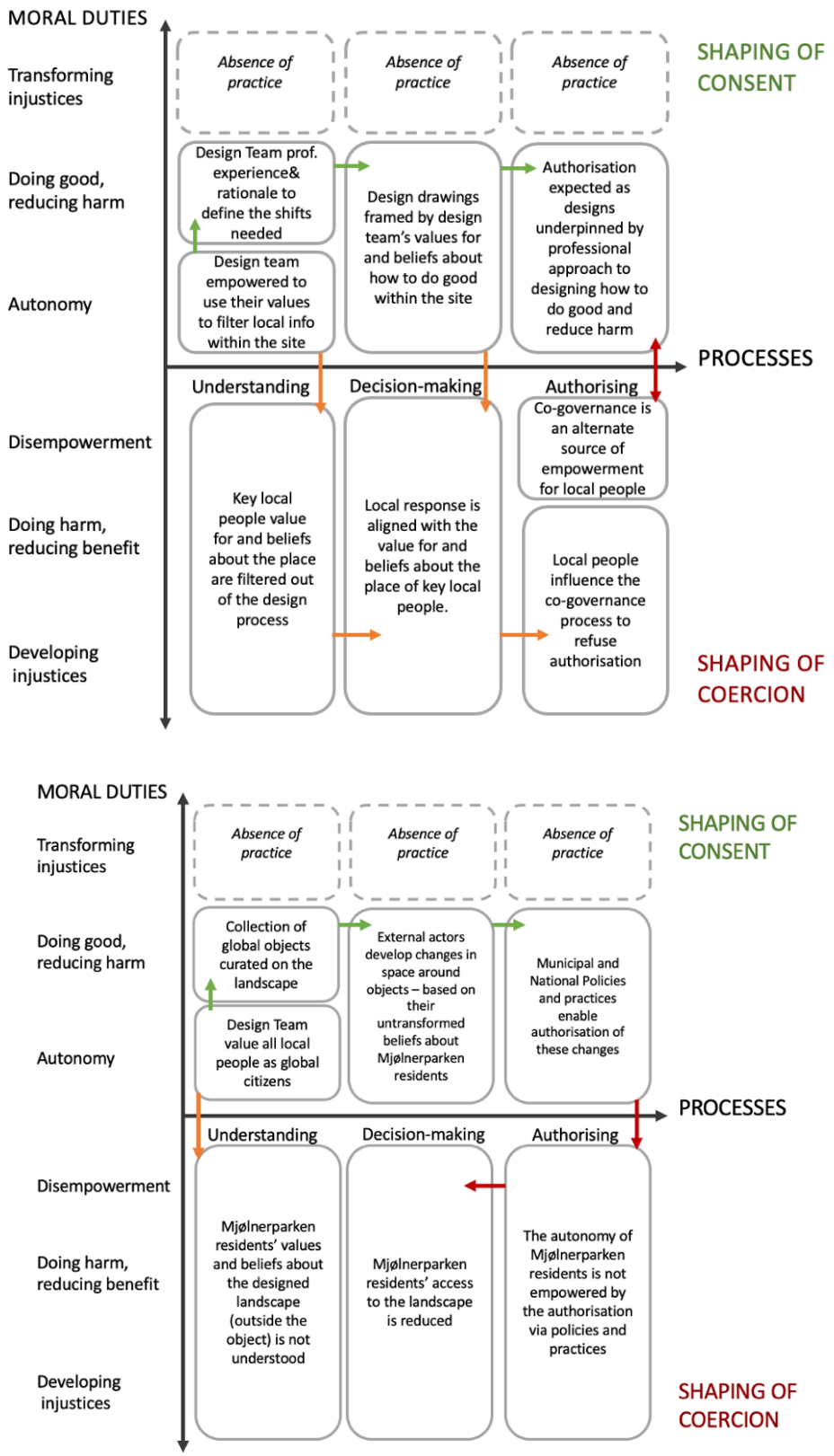

Figure 6.1: The Framework of Informed Consent: Summary diagrams for Case 1, Aro Valley (top) and Case 2, Grønne Park (bottom)

Table 6.1 Questions developed during the study, and then used to form the summary findings diagrams completed for each Case Study.

Shaping consent	Shaping coercion
Who developed the idea or frames (e.g., the design team, local people)?	Who is expected, but is absent from or disruptive of the participatory design process or landscape?
Where (and who) did their idea come from (e.g., design team living close by, rewilding gardener)?	What values and beliefs about a place are excluded/absent (e.g., the bunker as heritage)?
What practices and procedures were used to develop and sustain the idea (e.g., site boundaries)?	How did the practices and procedures used lead to their absence?
What was used to communicate and sustain that idea (e.g., design drawings, global objects, gum trees)?	What happens as a result of them being excluded or absent (e.g., co-governance group intervenes)?
Who, or what else supports or is supported by that idea or frame (and the values and beliefs associated with it) (e.g., municipal and state policies)?	What, and how did, wider settings (e.g., policies) exclude them?

Three key insights are identified by considering these diagrams together. These exemplify the usefulness of informed consent as an interpretive lens – in particular it addresses the gap in thinking at the real-life intersection between local people and design teams (as examined in Theoretical Framework - section 2.3.3). Each insight relates to one of three domains: how local people are empowered to shape consent, how design professionals are empowered to shape consent and how the use of 'site' influences both the shaping of consent and the *course of action* consented to. These domains can be connected by returning to the theoretical thinking on the 'grammar of consent' (introduced in section 2.4.1). That is, ***who*** consents to ***whom***, to do ***what***: the one who consents (A), and the one (B) who initiates the process of inquiry which leads to A giving permission for B to follow a particular course of action (φ) (Kleinig, 2010). However, there is also a necessary overlap between these grammatical elements in the insights as they are most relevant to this study of consent as the sum of their parts. Also, not all actors acted within their expected domains – perhaps partly due to the novelty of the lens in this setting. Table 6.2 summarises the insights from each case – and identifies three cross case insights that will be examined into this Chapter. The following three sections consider each of these insights in turn.

Table 6.2: Summary of insights from each case - leading to cross case insights

Case 1 Aro Valley key findings	Case 2 Superkilen key findings	Cross Case Insights
The co-existence of three different participatory practices (pre-design participatory process, participatory design, and co-governance group) resulted in an unforeseen consequence: Local co-governance group members were empowered by other local people during the participatory pre-design process to give a clear 'no' to the design drawings, but there was no process that empowered them to develop a 'yes'.	The participatory design process for Grønne Park, Superkilen did not negotiate greater equity for the residents of Mjølnerparken in place-based relationships with other residents. This was because the process did not engage sufficiently with the constellation of autonomies that already existed around Grønne Park.	Limitations in how participatory design practices interact with heterogeneous relationships between local people and their places can lead to limitations or the failure of a participatory project. See Section 6.2
The participatory design process primarily empowered the design team's autonomy to do good. This was based on their own way of valuing the place and believing in how it could do good. However, it did not negotiate greater equity with and for local people.	The design team for Grønne Park were concerned that ethnically Danish residents of Nørrebro would dominate the residents of Mjølnerparken, and disrupt their professional autonomy, and so their ability to design how to 'do good'. In response to this concern, the design team configured the participatory design process so only the design team's own values and beliefs were empowered.	The way participatory design practices empower a design team can compromise fulfilment of a participatory project brief. Problems may include insufficient clarity of purpose and a lack of practices that support deliberate shifts in equity in a place. See section 6.3

The participatory design process limited the 'site' of participation within the spatially defined 'site' of design. This limited 'site' of participation differed from local people's relationship to their place, and so existing local autonomy was not empowered by the participatory design process.	The participatory process for Grønne Park did not have a 'site' as it focused locals on proposing global objects. The focus on objects led to unforeseen consequences, as the 'background' landscape features became cared for by unexpected actors, from across Copenhagen. These Copenhagen actors held negative views of the residents of Mjølnerparken. This has fuelled spatial segregation, alienating behaviours and gentrification.	Poor alignment between the 'sites' of participation and local relationships to the places may disrupt both the participatory design process and the equity derived from the local relationship to the designed place. In particular, the professional framing of the site changes may unexpectedly activate diverse sources of power underscoring heterogeneous local relationships to place leading to disruption of the process and/or resultant designed place. See section 6.4

6.2 Limitations from how local relationships to place were empowered within the participatory design process

This section considers limitations in how participatory design practices interact with heterogeneous relationships between local people and their places can lead to limitations or the failure of a participatory project. Section 6.2.1 will focus on how the role of local people explicitly and implicitly shaped consent (and coercion). Section 6.2.2 questions how this active interface, between local values and the design teams be improved from the perspective of local people (as consenters). Finally, section 6.2.3 discusses how the design team accounted for the local understanding of the place and its future in the designed *course of action*, where the brief's aim is to negotiate equity and so develop a more just place.

6.2.1 How the participatory design process intervenes in a place

The analysis of the case studies identified and confirmed important limitations within the theory and practice of participatory design. Key to this was recognising how the professional-led participatory design process interacted with the existing relationships between local people and their place. This leads to a finding that the design team guided a participatory design process that aimed to shape their own consent *(designers as both A & B in the grammar of consent),* and local people were peripheral.

In Aro Valley, the design process used standardised participatory design process: it had specific, pre-defined procedures for local input that they used in all their projects. The changes proposed for Aro Valley were influenced by two sets of existing autonomies: the professional design team and local people. These autonomies interacted to shape consent using three different processes: participatory design, co-governance and existing local relationships. The empirical findings revealed how the professional design team tried to limit local autonomy to assure the continuing autonomy of the professional design process. The intent was that the design team defined how to *do good* and *reduce harm* here. However, this did not take account of two factors. First, existing local empowerment derived from the community's relationship to the place. Second, local people had a degree of autonomy within the co-governance process, as the co-governance group included local representatives. Interactions between

these two factors enabled local people to stall the project. However, local people were not then able to get the design drawings changed to reflect better how they wanted to develop justice here. The result was that the project failed.

In contrast, Case 2, Grønne Park, can be considered bespoke participatory design, where the process took account of two synchronic considerations. First is the social justice intent of the brief. Second, a design team concerned with whether a standard participation process could both achieve that brief and assure their professional autonomy. Figure 6.1 shows how the participatory design process shaped consent by overtly constraining the interactions of local people in three ways: with each other (by providing a task for individuals/known groups), with the design team (by asking them to submit object proposals), and with the place (the design team curated the objects and designed the wider place). Similarly, to Case 1, Aro Valley, the primary rationale for the design team's approach was to manage the risk to the design process that arose from diverse local people's empowerment, and in particular from those with different values and beliefs to the design team. After the project opening, some local people (not residents of Mjølnerparken) remained empowered by broader policies and practices and were now more attracted to Grønne Park due to its redesign. So, the artificial (as in not related to the place) constraints of the participatory design process did not achieve the transformational, social justice goal of the brief. In practice, the interaction between the participatory and design processes, within participatory design, led to a landscape that primarily attracted people from the wider city. It was these people who became lead actors in the on-going changes to Grønne Park. As a consequence, there was an unexpectedly increased segregation of those the project intended to empower; the residents of Mjølnerparken. Thus, *justice* was eroded not developed.

Both case studies echo other cases in the literature. They describe a failure to achieve the expected outcomes of professional design teams when they engage in participatory design, due to the professional process being disrupted when it comes into contact with the pre-existing relationships between local people and their place (Arnstein, 1972; Calderon, 2019; Clausen, 2017; Del Gaudio et al., 2020; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Richardson & Connelly, 2005). Notably, in both Aro Valley and Superkilen, the design teams assumed the participatory design process would be the sole source of empowerment for local people, which is a default position that has also been critiqued by a number of other studies (Carr, 2012; Slavin, 2016; Tritter &

McCallum, 2006). These cumulative findings suggest that the design teams misunderstood power. They considered autonomy within participatory processes as a finite, controllable resource. This meant they believed they needed to compete with or exclude those local people whose values differ from their own. They believed this would help retain their autonomy, and so authorship of the *course of action* described in the design drawings. They did not, as informed consent signals, consider the possibility of differing roles, with differing autonomies. Or, as design thinking signals, consider the possibility of transforming all the values and beliefs about a place (including their own) by how they designed.

This interpretation suggests that in both cases reported here, participatory design had only a temporary and partial influence on the places and local people – and that that influence was insufficient to meet the social justice aims of the design briefs. This raises an evident concern that, in both cases, the design team overestimated the extent to which participatory design would enable them to meet the brief. In both cases this was due to a participatory design process that did not recognise the complex contingency of the local context of participatory design – a critique already well-made by scholars such as Slavin (2016) and Flyvbjerg (1998) (see section 2.3.3). This insight challenges the procedural and processional nature of much participatory design literature and the disciplinary tendencies of Landscape Architecture as an applied discipline. As identified in Chapter 2, the disciplinary focus is aligned with that of the designer (i.e., how to guide a participatory design process that reaches for participatory ideals). The problem with this singular focus is well examined in the literature on participatory design (see Chapter 2), in particular it obscures how design thinking and design practice limit the benefits of local participation (Arnstein, 1972; Biddulph, 2012; Greenwood, 1993; Griffin et al., 2015; Schön, 1990).

The design teams use several techniques and ways of thinking about participatory design to position themselves *outside* the politics of the local relationship to place. This confirms a tendency previously reported for design professionals to consider the design process as inherently apolitical, despite it resulting in decisions that favour certain people (Biddulph, 2012; Smyth, 1989). Therefore, in participatory development terms, both the Aro Valley and Grønne Park cases demonstrated a firmly imminent (makeability of society through specific social interventions) rather than immanent (taking account of historical processes of social change) participatory design process (Stenton & Cowen, 1996).

Slavin (2016) explores how this tendency of design teams to distance themselves from local politics results from designers understanding themselves to be "the centre of the system" (p.1) – due to a focus on their 'system' – the design process (see section 2.3.1). The Aro Valley and Grønne Park cases show how participation does not automatically counterbalance this. So participatory design as framed by designers is not inherently democratic, as it does not position local people as consenters *(A in the grammar of consent).* Instead, it seeks to position designers as both defining the *course of action (B)* and consenting to that *course of action (A)*.

However, the participatory design process is not a separate entity and will inevitably interact with complex extant realities. So, centring the participatory design process and separating it from its context is unhelpful and ineffective idealism (Beauregard, 2015; Boelens, 2011; Innes & Booher, 1999; Flyvberg, 1998; Murphy, 2017; Slavin, 2016). This finding signals a need for further consideration of the suitability of participatory design for projects where the brief seeks to develop social justice via local consent. Why do design teams seek to centre themselves and the participatory design process, and how might they be encouraged and supported to integrate their practice within the local relationship to place?

Furthermore, in both case studies, participatory design procedures were used to introduce constraint and controls to the relationship between local people and their place to assure design autonomy. For instance, in Aro Valley, the design team described local people as the problem, for being 'revolutionary' rather than 'evolutionary' and giving feedback that differed from the design team's understanding of site. In both cases, the design teams responded to dissonance by further confining the role of local people in order to protect their own design autonomy. It is important to note that both design teams were influenced by their prior experience of local participation, where their autonomy had been disrupted. This suggests that counter to the aims of its early pioneers (Hester, 1975; Hirsch, 2014; Liu, 1999), mainstream participatory design may be sliding from a process focused on participatory ideals which shape local consent, to a focus on assuring design autonomy, which shapes local coercion.

The influence of the cautionary experience of locals disrupting the design process is a concern raised in other empirical studies, where the primary conclusion has been to suggest enhancing the often normative role of the designer with additional practices (Carr, 2012; De La Pena et al., 2017; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Richardson & Connelly, 2005). Underlying this literature, is an

assumption, examined in other disciplines (see section 2.3.1), that public participation is a kind of "tyranny" (Cooke & Kothari 2001, title page) that obscures and disrupts established and 'good' professional process and practices (Tritter and McCallum 2006). In contrast, this study's findings can be considered as providing explicit practice-based findings to support professionals to respond to the accompanying critique of professional design practice as opaque and apolitical when used in the complex contingent settings of urban design. The result is insights into how the relationship between the professional and local actors influences participatory design (Beauregard, 2015; Boelens, 2011; Innes & Booher, 1999; Calderon, 2013), which raises the question of how design teams and other stakeholders can move from normative roles to a more collaborative and agile position that accounts for the multiple axiologies that underpin epistemic justices/injustices. This concern has been given increasing attention in studies that explore how environmental and urban planning accounts for indigenous worldviews (Bennett et al 2021; Glackin & Dionisio 2016; Larsen 2017). Opening the door for what scholars in adjacent disciplines have termed, an opportunity to move from "tyranny to transformation" of their processes and practices (Hickey & Mohan, 2004 p.1).

6.2.2 How the local relationship to place relates to professional-led participatory design

How can this active interface between the design team and local values be improved from the perspective of local people (as consenters)? In both cases, there are clear findings about the influence of local people, landscape interactions that are external to the interactions led by the design team as part of the participatory design process. These reveal that the existing autonomy of local people was underpinned by their values for, and beliefs about the landscape (both cases) and/or other local people (Case 2, Grønne Park). These values and beliefs empowered the local understanding(s) that influenced the shaping of consent, but the participatory design process did not directly seek or engage with them. Yet the values and beliefs remained influential and ultimately disruptive to the participatory design process. This is signified in the shape of consent for the design drawings (both cases) and designed landscape (Case 2, Grønne Park).

From a professional design standpoint, acknowledging the persistent nature of the 'local' shifts the debate on valuing the local relationship with the landscape. Instead of being aimed at

improving design outcomes through an ideal case of democratic local input (for example, Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Till, 2005), grounding design in the local relationship to place is now a fundamental pragmatic necessity for professional practice to meet public sector briefs – as dealt with by justice-orientated scholars (for example, Griffin et al., 2020; Griffin & Weimer, 2020), building on foundational scholars such as Arnstein (1969, 1972). This shift opens the door to further aligning the procedural literature with literature on design outcomes, such as Relph's (1976) seminal thinking on the identity of places and placelessness. Further, to the wider body of literature that examines how people relate to and develop justice and injustice through their relationship to place (Appleyard 1981; Buttimer, 1976; Cresswell, 1996, & 2002; Glackin & Dionisio 2016; Janowski & Ingold, 2012; Lefebvre, 1991; Liu, 1999; Olwig, 2016; Soja, 2010; Tuan, 1974; Yates 2021). Recognition of this relationship between participatory design and the identities and justice of place raises a key question about how consent in participatory design relates to, and interlinks, participatory design process, and to designed space. This will be developed in the final insight of this Chapter – which considers how the interactions between design teams and local people develop a *course of action* (the planned outcome from design).

In both cases, local people had existing roles (and so autonomies). The design team were aware of these roles which became influential within the participatory design process. In Case 1, Aro Valley, they involved local people who used the place regularly and exercised past and present stewardship of the place's past and future. In Case 2, Grønne Park, it was active citizens from wider Copenhagen, who expected to define and access benefits from city spaces such as Grønne Park and its adjacent sites by, for example: planting, drinking, doing business, riding bikes and walking for both leisure and transport. In both cases, similar landscape objects became the focus of their relationship to place; semi-derelict areas activated by temporary practices (graffiti, drug-taking, informal sleeping areas for people experiencing homelessness), pathways and their multiple access points, and planting. These examples signal a need to support design to recognise how the local overlapping, heterogeneous relationships to place (Larsen & Johnson, 2017) interact with design practices (e.g., 'derelict' areas that present design 'opportunities' may already have an active local relationship to a place in their 'derelict' state). So, it is problematic for designers to autonomously decide to remove them and display

this in design drawings, with no prior process to examine their potential local significance (Case 1, Aro Valley, episode 3 The Bunker/Pavilion and Case 2, Grønne Park, episode 3 The Fence).

Equally, it can be problematic to give primary attention to larger-scale mobility routes, such as those used to connect cyclists to the wider city, when these paths are also hyper-local places for local residents and families (Case 1, Aro Valley, ep. 2 The Pinch Point and Case 2, Grønne Park, ep. 3 The Intersection). Local-led planting such as The Gum Trees (Case 1, Aro Valley) and The Slope (Case 2, Grønne Park) can surface local values and beliefs about the place. To ignore these in site practices is to ignore how wider political settings affect heterogeneous local relationships to place. Investigations of the local relationship to particular landscape elements, (e.g., trees), is outside the scope of this thesis, but these findings indicate an unbuilt bridge between participatory design and other parts of the discipline that address the local relationship to particular landscape elements (e.g., the local 'stickiness' of trees) (Bowring, 2019).

6.2.3 How multiple participatory processes interface to influence the local role in participatory design

In Case 1, Aro Valley, local people influenced the participatory design process via the co-governance group and during participatory workshops. They challenged the design team to better justify their understanding of local values. The local aim was to use the values and beliefs that underpin their understanding to negotiate equity and so develop a more just place. In Case 2, Grønne Park, local people were empowered/disempowered at a broader scale – via municipal and state policies and practices (e.g., Copenhagen's Co-Creation Policy and the Danish Ghetto Policy). The participatory design process integrated this place into the identity of wider Nørrebro, Copenhagen and Denmark and so enabled more comprehensive policies and practices to gain influence at Grønne Park. As the use of diverse participatory approaches, including by municipal clients, becomes more commonplace in our cities (Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006; Knudtzon, 2018), this raises a timely ethical and practical question for design teams: how the participatory design process can become more effective amongst and within multiple democratic practices? In particular *how* can public space be designed with cognisance of the broader settings of democratic institutions, and local social justice? This question signals a

route to mature an ethical professional stance in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. The case findings suggest that greater attention to informed consent may provide professionals with a framework to move beyond the procedural, processional process, and respond to contextual contingencies. This response includes the ability to define boundaries against outside forces. When using informed consent all professional practices and outcomes refer up to informed consent as the professional process is obliged to fulfil their moral duties to the layperson (Kleinig, 2010).

A secondary realisation is that the procedural focus of the design team obscured their own lack of understanding of under what conditions those procedures can fulfil the intent of participation. The result was the design teams constrained the participatory process within the design process. This signals a need to delve deeper as to consider how participatory design interacts with other participatory processes. In particular it is useful to use these cases to examine the interrelationship between 'participatory' and 'design'.

In both cases, the design team's understanding of participation is that it focuses on local people. Specifically, relationships between the design team and local peoples (albeit the object of that relationship is the site/place). This focus on human interactions is common in the wider academic and applied thinking on public participation (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006; Hickey & Mohan, 2004), and it's fair to assume stems from its foundational theories (e.g., Habermas's (1981) theory of communicative action). Landscape Architecture was shown, as expected, to focus on the physical and spatial elements of the place. This difference, between participatory practices and design practice, is bridged by the designer. The designer abstracts ideas from the outcomes of participatory practices, to inform how they edit physical and spatial elements of a site.

Yet, in both cases, local understanding was grounded in local relationships with each other and landscape objects and spaces (e.g., planting gum trees, doing graffiti on walls, cycling and walking along pathways). The result was a participatory approach which did not notice, and so take account of, what local people took account of: namely the local perspective. Local people were dealt with in the participatory design process as human units, displaced and decontextualised from their place. These units provided information that catalysed designers' ideas. In contrast, other participatory approaches – such as the co-governance group (Case 1,

Aro Valley) and Copenhagen's Co-Creation Policy (Case 2, Grønne Park) sought to empower the local relationship to place. This dimension of the findings will be further explored in relation to insight 2, which examines the design professional's role, and insight 3, which examines the impact of 'site' on the shaping of consent, and considers the entwinement of procedural consent, during the process, with spatial consent – prior to and as a result of the participatory process.

Overall, these two case studies indicate that participatory design has been used to limit local influences on the design team's work, but with limited effect. They show the divergent and dissonant powers of both the design team and local people over shaping consent. This signals an opportunity to develop theory and practice that better aligns these powers and interests during a contingent process. It could pivot thinking away from being about empowering *either* local people *or* the design team as proposed explicitly by Carr (2012), and as per the approach of much existing scholarship (for example, Arnstein, 1969; De La Pena et al., 2017; Hester, 2006; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Till, 2005), to thinking focused on constructive co-existence of local people and designers within the processes of Landscape Architecture and urban design.

6.3 Limitations from how design teams are empowered within the participatory design process

This section will discuss the ways participatory design practices empower a design team and can compromise fulfilment of a participatory project brief. Problems may include insufficient clarity of purpose and a lack of practices that support deliberate shifts in equity in a place.

6.3.1 Design Professionals responding to their prior experience of the limitations of participatory design

In both case studies, the design team sought to filter heterogeneous local points of view in a way that would assure their design autonomy. This contrasts with the intent of design thinking; to synthesise and so transform heterogeneous views into a coherent, and – in the context of these briefs – more just decisions (Hester, 2006; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Sanoff, 2011; Till,

2005). This augments the earlier point, that these (mainstream) design teams were not aware of the fundamental tenets of participatory design, despite their expertise in participatory design procedures. In Case 1, Aro Valley, the local consensus on key principles (deliberated in the pre-design participatory process) was presented to the design team. The design team did not use these principles, as they did not relate adequately to their definition of 'site'. Instead, they identified majority concerns, by aggregating feedback solely on physical elements within the site. This incidentally excluded minority viewpoints, including those of respected long-term members of the community. The outcome was design drawings that dislocated people from place and did not appropriately describe the multivalent heterogeneous place-based relationships. Local people did not support the resultant design drawings. Dissensus arose between the drawings and local people. The design team saw re-building local consensus as outside their role.

In Case Study 2, the design team's prior experience of public participation informed their negative view of consensus-building deliberative procedures. They considered it could not manage existing inequities, as recognised by Boano and Kelling (2014). So, the team actively sought an alternate approach where consensus was not required. They did this by introducing a procedure where local people did discrete, parallel tasks, proposing objects for the sites of participation. These sites of participation were governed by the designers, guided by the needs of the broader site of design.

Boano and Kelling (2014) considered that the reason deliberative consensus does not manage existing inequities is that it tends to act with totalising self-sufficiency that externalises dissonant perspectives. Both cases reveal that participatory design process has the same tendency. However, scholars have shown how this tendency to exclude dissonant perspectives can de-stabilise the design process itself, which presents risks to the design team achieving their purpose within the allocated resource (Calderon, 2013, 2019; Clausen, 2017; Flyvberg, 1998; Slavin, 2016). So, the design team's response was inadequate, due to limitations inherent to design practice (e.g., how site interacts with larger and overlapping places), and the opaqueness of design thinking. Therefore, the cases raise the question of whether design focused participation is a sufficient overarching methodology for changing how professional designers respond to the complexities of urban places.

It is noteworthy that in both cases the design team and design thinking, were central to the process of change. Design thinking defines itself by its ability to transform wicked problems stemming from heterogeneity via synthesis into valued proposals (Dorst, 2015; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Roozenburg, 1995). This study supports Calderon's (2013) conclusions that designer-led participatory design has limitations in heterogeneous situations and may be better suited to less complex settings. This is contrary to the contexts in which participatory design was introduced in this study – where structural injustices play out and raises the question of how a participatory design process can engage with the complex 'real world' of urban design.

The participatory approaches in the two cases may be a result of the mainstreaming of participatory design. Neither of these design teams had a record of social activism or of disrupting the inequitable status quo via the ideals of participatory practice (Hirsch, 2014b). These cases showed local participation as a subsidiary to standard management of projects and assuring the designers' primacy in that. This co-option of participation as a means to retain control is a disappointing result for scholars who thought exposure to participatory design would shift mainstream designers from the centre of the process (Hester, 2012; Hirsch, 2014b; Slavin, 2016). It is also counter to the core offer of design thinking; as an approach for transforming dissonance into something collectively valued (Dorst, 2011; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Roozenburg, 1995). This signals a need to shift from assuming professional control as the rational and so best approach – to an explicit methodology for managing professional/lay relationships – such as Informed Consent.

6.3.2 Design Professionals co-opting different legitimacies: expert and local

It is relevant to consider how the design professionals maintained their central role. The design teams positioned themselves in the role of arbitrating between local, heterogeneous perspectives of the site and used their values and beliefs to guide their arbitration and support the synthesis of design decisions. To assert this role they did something expected, and something unexpected.

First, they positioned themselves *as* professionals, using the familiar idea of the expert as rational and objective - and so legitimate in their decision-making. Second, however they augmented this professional 'expert' role by also defining themselves as 'local' people. In Case 1, Aro Valley, they made this claim by virtue of their office location. In Case 2, Grønne Park, the design team claimed local credentials as residents of wider Nørrebro. This move to being 'locals' was introduced because the design teams recognised that local people have a legitimate and insightful understanding of a place. In particular local people are well placed to consider how to renegotiate equity and so develop justice, a fundamental premise in the literature on how local participation corrects injustice (Arnstein, 1969; Griffin et al., 2020). However, the design teams only demonstrated a partial understanding of this thinking and neglected an underlying and explicit feature of the participatory literature. They did not understand that participation aims to stimulate the empowerment of local autonomies that are sustained *beyond* the design process. So, an imminent participation process continued to steward the development of immanent local justice (Cowen & Shenton, 1996). Yet, they also promised (as pseudo local people) to deliver the benefits of local empowerment. Together, these two moves (design expertise and pseudo local) create a chimeric role that sidesteps the tension in values and beliefs that they are concerned may disrupt their professional process. It is clear however that this approach does not achieve the promised equity outcomes of participatory design – as shown in the case framework diagrams (Figure 6.1). It shapes consent to define the designers' idea of a 'good' but does not transform, via participatory design, different ideas of good to re-balance 'goods' and so develop justice. Hence it both denies and lacks the complexity of the local relationship to place.

6.3.3 Signification of informed consent: questions about drawing practices

The *signification* of consent is central to the issues raised in this section. If informed consent is interpreted as a communicative act, not simply a feeling or state of mind (Kleinig, 2010; Specker Sullivan, 2017), then it requires deliberate signification. This is similar to Schön's (1992) proposition to consider "design as a conversation with the materials of the situation" (p.3) indicating design as a communicative act that leads to physical signification.

Case 1, Aro Valley, identified that the design team dismissed local concerns about design proposals as either plan *illiteracy*, or outside the site and other constraints. This illustrates how local feedback can appear misguided, when they contradict the rationality of the design drawings as defined by the design team's own axiology, or values and beliefs. That axiology had guided design practice and so defined the decisions inscribed in the design drawings but filtered out other perspectives. The outcome was design drawings that appeared rational to the designers but did not feel local to local people, expressed as the lack of 'Aro-ness'. There were no deliberative practices to signify and resolve this dissonance when it arose, although relevant procedures are explained in the existing procedural literature (De La Pena et al., 2017; Parnell et al., 2002; Sanoff, 1984). This indicates limited capability in the design team. It meant they did not have the expertise to respond to local concerns (Hoddinott et al., 2019) and raises a question about the mainstreaming of participation. How can design teams without specific participatory training become conscious of gaps in their expertise in different contexts? Is there potential to use informed consent as a higher-order methodology to articulate this awareness?

In both cases, the design drawings were the primary approach to signifying and therefore shaping consent. In Case 1, Aro Valley, local people identified the design drawings as both where and how their commitment to a future *course of action* would be *signified*. In contrast, the design team placed a different emphasis on the interactions between local people and design drawings, intended to enable the design team to hone their design decisions. It is interesting that the design team centred themselves in the process, with the drawings as a communication aid, whereas local people centred the design drawings as being the crux of the process.

The design team's approach is supported by the existing procedural literature on Participatory Design, which emphasises the direct relationship between local people and designers as being developed via drawings and other visualisation practices (De La Pena et al., 2017; Hester, 2006; Sanoff, 1984). Their role is to stimulate the designers' abductive process and imagination (Hoddinott et al., 2019; Till, 2005) rather than centring the local relationship to place. Therefore, participation of local people, as described, was a secondary purpose.

It is also significant that the Aro Valley design process used drawing practices that worked from big moves to small details, to develop a package of design drawings that could be built. These wider design practices implicitly avoided effective 'deliberation' between professional designers and local people, and their relationship to place (see Section 2.3.2). The study showed how designers' processional, progressive approach, moving forward by going from big to small, is significantly different to the local relationship to place – which is best characterised, drawing on concepts of Burns and Kahn (2021), as made up of diverse, overlapping relationships to an area, influenced and affected by other areas (or landscape elements). This raises the question of in what ways, and to what extent, existing drawing practices are suitable for participatory design and if not, how can existing drawing practices be adapted or novel ones be developed?

In summary, the modes of *signification* within the participatory design process, (e.g., design drawings, models, presentations), are not only ontologically opaque (Turnbull & Hoppe, 2019) but also defined by the design process and its drawing practices. This confirms that participatory practices are supplementary, and so an insufficient challenge to the design practices (Lamm & Wagner, 2020). This suggests a challenge as to how to develop drawing practices that are suitable for *signifying* a *course of action* that local people consent to. The next section will start to address this.

6.3.4 Transparent ontologies: managing the influence of design professionals' values and beliefs

As discussed, Turnbull & Hoppe (2019) argued that a normative and objective professional design process is ontologically opaque. Both cases exemplify the influence and impact of this critique, by making the design team's values and beliefs apparent. In Case Study 1 there were on-going discussions about the design drawings not expressing the local relationship with the landscape – their values and beliefs about the place. This resulted in confusion about why that was and who would be responsible for changing it, with the design team noting their unwillingness to make a substantive and expensive U-turn, effectively starting the design process again from alternate, local principles. In Case Study 2, the design team had an explicit social justice intent. They aimed to better represent the values and beliefs about racial diversity

that underpinned 'their' suburb, Nørrebro and its external identity, but this obscured internal differences and inequities within that suburb and the city's wider policies and practices; in effect marginalising the people of Mjølnerparken and their relationships to this place.

The Case Study findings therefore add further nuance to the understanding of the design process as an opaque ontology. They highlight that the design drawings (in both cases) and the completed landscape itself (in Case Study 2) are both underpinned by the design team's values and beliefs – their axiology, but that these are seldom made explicit. As a result, their singular ontological interpretation of the place frames the professional design process and is signified, as discussed (for example in design drawings), which marginalise the values of the people (residents of Mjølnerparken) whose lives the client (Copenhagen Municipality) intended to transform.

Chapter 2 interprets informed consent as a morally transformative social act where one person (A) signifies the transfer of their moral rights to act to another (B), for a specific course of action (φ). In the two cases, by unpacking the signification (design drawings and landscape) it became clear there is a conflation of role (A) and role (B) – with the design team acting, to a significant extent, as both consenter and consentee during all three processes of consent. It is their understanding and their decision-making that informs the design – and an expectation (mostly achieved in Case Study 2, and de-railed in Case Study 1) that their professional recommendation will be confirmed by the authorisation process that leads to the construction of the designed place.

Overall, the self-defined designers' role was to decide 'objectively' between different local perspectives in order, as Slavin (2016) describes, to centre their own imagination. However, as these case studies suggest, design imagination is underpinned by pre-existing personal values and beliefs which leads to a (flawed) proposition. In Case Study 1, Aro Valley, the participatory design process was focused on the values of the wider profession – specifically those of award-winning design. In Case Study 2, Grønne Park, the focus was on the design team's values and beliefs about racism, aligned with the 'ethnically Danish' creative class of Nørrebro. This shows how there were immanent processes at play, but ones that were drawn on the designers' reflections grounded in their wider personal and professional lives, rather than the local relationship to place. This raises a question about whether participation is an adequate

approach to resolving these complexities, or whether in fact the literature opens an (idealistic) 'can of worms' which mainstream design practitioners then have to grapple with whilst working within real-life contingencies.

These findings also highlight the limitation of Schön's (1983, 1990) counsel for designers' self-reflection, further explored in more recent scholarship (Greenwood, 1993; Lamm & Wagner, 2020; Turnbull & Hoppe, 2019). They suggest a need for reflective practices that differentiate between surfacing a designers' own values and beliefs, and challenging limiting beliefs about a place.

By developing thinking on informed consent in this new setting, the case findings have illustrated how conflating the roles within consent leads to very practical problems during participatory design (both cases), and in the subsequent landscape (Case Study 2). This raises an idea – that to effectively shape consent, using participatory design, design practices need to adopt epistemological practices which have a moral basis, such as informed consent. Informed consent would give primary attention to the local axiologies and ontologies – and so negotiate the development of localised justice. The potential for exploring new consentful epistemes of practice is supported by the literature on Landscape Democracy, that pivots from the normative professional design perspective of participatory design in order to advocate for the vitality of local values and beliefs about their place (Arler & Mellqvist, 2015; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Egoz et al., 2018; Horrigan & Bose, 2018). This could detect "the level of substantive landscape democracy going beneath the façade of aesthetic appearance" (Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018, p. 47).

6.4 Limitations from the interactions between the 'sites' of participation and the local relationships to the place.

This section will examine how poor alignment between the 'sites' of participation and local relationships to the places may disrupt both the participatory design process and the equity derived from the local relationship to the designed place. In particular, the professional framing of the site changes may unexpectedly activate diverse sources of power underscoring

heterogeneous local relationships to place leading to disruption of the process and/or resultant designed place.

6.4.1 Configurations of sites that disempower local people

I have earlier suggested the primary intent of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design practice as being to *signify* a physical and spatial *course of action* that transforms a specific place. In the two case studies and also commonly found in the wider scholarship on participatory design, the intent of this course of action is social; to enhance the justice derived from a place (spatial justice). Chapter 2 identified the centrality of the 'site' in Landscape Architectural practice, identifying it as the principal approach to defining and guiding a course of action. The case findings confirm this and address the influence of site on the shaping of consent - both during and as a result of the participatory design process.

In Case Study 1, the findings show that 'site' was, as Kahn and Burns (2021) critiqued, used as a normative boundary. The case revealed that within this boundary the design team attempted to control the development of decisions of *how to do good and reduce harm* here. In contrast, the local relationship to place is complex and implicit, as Relph (1976) examined in his seminal work on place and placelessness, where he argued for a need to have a clear understanding of the depth and complexity of place as it is experienced and fashioned by local people. Spatially, both cases identified a local place that consisted of overlapping heterogeneous areas (Larsen & Johnson, 2017) and that the participatory design process did not articulate and dignify this in its practices. These local areas were bounded, by immanent concerns such as past local events including to plant trees and mundane, everyday landscape features, such as roads and residential areas, but not by the site boundaries drawn by the design team.

In analysing these relationships in Aro Valley it is useful to extrapolate from the Burns and Kahn (2021) conceptualisation of site practices but remove its imminent and normative focus on the professional designer. This reveals that the area of alleged *design* control was different from the areas of existing *local* control. The result of this dissonance, as examined above, can be described using Østmo and Law's (2018) term, as a "mis-translation" (p. 1), which indicates a lack of recognition of difference, a "betrayal" (p.15) of the local that generates dissonance and

conflict. Østmo and Law (2018) consider that it is in fact best to resist the translation and instead work with a "recognition of difference", and the Aro Valley Case Study signals that for participatory design to support the development of democracy and so justice – there is a need for a further shift, from recognising difference, to a framework for practicing *with* 'difference'. Informed consent is one such approach. It enabled the analysis to identify and articulate a purpose for each 'difference' by taking the grammar of consent and following the framing and guiding of its composite processes and duties.

In Case 2, Grønne Park, two distinct sites were identified within the participatory design process. The design team defined two of what Burns and Kahn (2021) referred to as "areas of alleged control" (akin to the traditional notion of site as the area where the design team acts). These were the sites of participation (signified by the objects), which sat on the wider site of design (defined by the brief). These two sites were created by the design team to enable them to temporarily control the overall pre-planned design concept and externalise undesirable local interactions. This is consistent with an earlier point, that design practice tends towards being totalising and self-sufficient (see section 6.4.1). It also builds on Stenton and Cowen's (1996) dual faces of participation; those which are imminent (specific social interventions) and those which are immanent (historical processes of social change) practices. Site practices are imminent practices. The designers' intention appears to be that they prevent disruption via immanent practices. But this controlling approach to 'site' also removes the opportunity for design thinking (Dorst, 2015; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Roozenburg, 1995; Rowe, 1987), to transform the wicked social problems inherent in immanent practices (e.g., the distrust by Heimsdalgade residents of Mjølnerparken residents).

Overall, the cases have highlighted a disconnect between how the procedures of participation shaped consent (termed here as *procedural consent*) and those in the course of action – the designed, future local relationship to place (termed here as *spatial consent).* This is significant, as it exemplifies a clear way that participation cannot be inherently good. It. also provides a clear rationale for how to improve the relationship between local people and design professionals – aligning *procedural consent with spatial consent*. This signals a need for Landscape Architecture and Urban Design to better engage with the wider literature on spatial justice (Appleyard 1981; Buttimer, 1976; Cresswell, 2002; Jacobs 1992; Janowski & Ingold, 2012; Lefebvre, 1991; Liu, 1999; Olwig, 2016; Soja, 2010; Tuan, 1974), and indeed for

practitioners to understand the foundational principles (beyond the procedures) of participation more properly (with due recognition for their limitations). This also highlights the potential value of Slavin's (2016) counsel, for more humble designers to act as participants in complex settings of design, rather than control their own system.

6.4.2 Absent local ontologies framing an unintentional coercive and unjust course of action

The previous section has shown that Case 2, Grønne Park, like Case 1, Aro Valley, uses participatory design processes to avoid the complexity of responding to existing local differences. Case Study 2 also showed how avoidance of dissonance within the participatory design process led to a failure to negotiate with undesired differences and so amplified their power. This set-in place a coercive course of action which eroded justice.

In Aro Valley, local people's awareness of the ontological complexity of their place enabled them to raise questions about the *course of action* inscribed in the design drawings. This led to the co-governance group defining a new course of action: stalling the participatory design process. This came as a surprise to the design team, who did not recognise co-governance as a spatial actor: they did not, in the words of Burns and Kahn (2021), consider this group as part of the "area of assumed influence" that "act upon a plot without being confined to it" (p. xiii). The design team had explicitly filtered out the actors who influenced the co-governance group and considered their feedback to be 'revolutionary' not 'evolutionary' – coercing the designs away from the design teams underlying values and beliefs about the site. Therefore, the neglect of local ontologies led to dissonance between the co-governance group and design team – experienced as mutual coercion.

Similarly, in Case Study 2, the design team did not work with the ontologies present in the 'area of assumed influence' of, for example, the adjacent residential and business areas, as they disagreed with their values and beliefs. Nor did they consider København's Co-Creation Policy and the Danish State's Ghetto Policy as influential over the third of Kahn's and Burns' (2021) areas: the "area of projected effect" (p.5). In both cases, the site was treated as an autonomous zone for design control, where those with similar axiologies were co-opted and others were ignored.

This raises a question about how to ensure participatory design meets its promoted aims of improving local justice (Agyeman & Evans, 2003; Arnstein, 1969, 1972, 1975; Griffin et al., 2020; Hester, 2006; Madanipour, 2010; Makhzoumi et al., 2011). Yet in neither case was the participatory process an adequate approach to transforming the democratic limitations of site practices, as identified by design scholars such as Relph (1976), Burns and Kahn (2021), and in the literature on Landscape Democracy, for example in Castiglioni and Ferrario (2018).

Overall, this final insight leads to a question about the vitality of what Beauregard (2013) called the different 'places of practice' within participatory design, both local places and professional places. And so, to a proposal that the utility of consent is less to support 'feeling together' with other people, as its etymology suggests. It is instead about how to practice together in amongst the dissonant and diverse places of practices within the clearly defined roles, duties and processes of informed consent. Therefore, the utility of a framework of consent is as an umbrella approach above the delivery of participatory procedures and design practices, in order to move beyond recognising (Østmo & Law, 2018) and to stepping into the complexity of practicing how to work in a particular place.

6.6 Summary

The Case Study findings reveal that participatory practices are insufficient to prevent an abstraction, by the design process, from the local relationships with their places. In these examples, designed places were abstracted away from being part of deep and complex local relationships. Instead, the places were regarded by the design teams as sites of their imagination. As such they became focused on the design teams values and beliefs about the wider place.

This approach was primarily intended to assure the autonomy of the design teams themselves. There were also direct (in the participatory practices) and in-direct (collateral from other design practices) attempts to actively constrain and control local people's autonomy within the participatory design process. Underpinning these was a belief based on prior experience; that participatory design processes led to local people's autonomy competing with design autonomy and so would disrupt and constrain the designers' imaginations.

This type of participation may become more pronounced as participatory design shifts to being a mainstream, rather than activist practice. However, the cases also revealed that it was ineffective in achieving its design aims. There was a lack of awareness of the persistent nature of the local relationship to place and the influence of immanent processes, such as national and municipal policies, and other participatory practices including the co-governance group. In both cases the participatory design process was unexpectedly disrupted – during the participatory design process (both cases), and the participatorily designed landscape (Case 2, Grønne Park).

This discussion has used a Framework of Informed Consent to understand these dynamics, which suggests that more explicit attention to consent could itself provide a productive way by which designers can notice and so make active choices about these unhelpful tendencies. In particular informed consent structures thinking at the under-considered juncture between local people and the design team and provides a practical framework to link professional reflexivity to specific higher-level moral duties. This offers potential to counter the design team's tendency to centre their own values and beliefs and would support design teams to better understand the causes of problems, prior to their disruption of the overall participatory process. A current lack of expertise in the processes of mediating and resolving those problems was also identified, arising despite, or perhaps because of, the potential and limitations of design thinking, drawing and site practices. This raises the question of how existing design practices need developing or supplementing with novel practices.

Overall, this study has exemplified how the adoption of a Framework of Informed Consent could guide or support the procedural focus by introducing a higher-order methodological and ethical focus. This study has also revealed the need to consider new practices or increase the relevance of existing ones. To achieve this, design teams need to have greater understanding and expertise in the thinking underpinning informed consent and indeed develop adequate design and participatory procedures.

The questions and concerns raised in this Chapter will now be examined in the final Chapter, Conclusion, to consider the potential of a *Framework of Informed Consent* to applied practice and research

Chapter 7 Conclusion

This final Chapter will examine three types of contributions from this study: theoretical, methodological, and substantive that have been developed in response to the research questions:

1. In what ways, and to what extent, does participatory design enable and impair the shaping of local informed consent?

2. In what ways, and to what extent, is informed consent a helpful concept in understanding participatory design practices?

The theoretical section 7.1 will examine the theoretical contribution and implications of the proposed 'Framework of Informed Consent' to participatory design. The methodological section 7.2 will focus on the benefits for understanding participatory design of a combined research methodology that includes non-human actors. The substantive section 7.3 will examine the implications for participatory design practice of the Case Study findings. Particular attention is given to the persistence of local relationships to place and their consequences for two aspects of design practice; first, that site design practices guide and frame the *process of inquiry* that develops the decisions that underpin informed consent; and second, the agency of design drawings in *signifying* the consented *course of action*.

7.1 Theoretical Contribution- The Framework of Informed Consent.

This study started from questions raised by my work within a participatory design context. These asked if design 'participation', as practised nowadays, was a good concept with which to develop greater local democracy and justice. The conceptual inadequacies of design participation identified in Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, signalled a need to support design teams with more robust theoretical thinking about the interactions between design professionals and local people. This is needed to better account for certain specific qualities of

design practice (compared to other types of public participation), whereby design professionals intervene for a limited period into typically complex, contingent and evolving social contexts in which the locus of design decision-making is primarily spatial and physical, not social.

From this, a proposition was developed; to re-theorise participatory design at a higher, overarching level – with the interdisciplinary concept of informed consent. The study has focused on the relationships between design professionals and the local people they serve. It has proposed that introducing informed consent into this relationship would better align Landscape Architecture and Urban Design with other disciplines concerned with health, social welfare, law, and democracy.

It was noted that, in disciplines such as medicine or law where informed consent is well established, professional practices as such do not act as the overarching methodology for engagement with lay people. Instead, all professional practices are honed so they sit underneath the broader methodology of informed consent; this guides professionals to empower laypeople to develop and commit to decisions that further their own wellbeing and justice. So together, but taking on distinct roles, professionals and laypeople jointly formulate a contextualised *course of action*.

The theoretical framework for this study was developed by diagramming concepts of informed consent drawn from this established professional usage. The diagram (Figure 2.2) displays (on the x-axis) three specific processes of informed consent (developing understanding, designing decisions and authorising a commitment) that in turn discharge (on the y-axis) three moral duties (autonomy, doing good or at least no harm and transforming injustice). The diagram was refined and populated during the empirical Case Study investigations to adapt the theoretical concepts to this disciplinary context of participatory design.

As the cases were investigated a description was developed for each point where a consent process and a duty intersect. How consent was being shaped in that episode, or overall in the case, is described by following these descriptions across the diagram. The framework diagrams for each episode or case generated important insights into how participatory design enabled and limited the shaping of consent in each Case Study. The generic framework developed from

interpreting the two cases through the theoretical lens of consent now provides a conceptual tool with which design scholars and design teams can better understand and apply informed consent to their research and practices.

There were two particular challenges in developing the informed consent framework. Both relate to the nature of justice. The literature on justice in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, as in all contexts, considers the real-life constraints alongside the challenge of inequities (Agyeman & Evans, 2003; Arler & Mellqvist, 2015; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Egoz et al., 2018; Fainstein, 2010; Griffin & Weimer, 2020). However adept the design thinking, there will still be finite possibilities for change, design always involves the necessity of making constrained choices. So, when the aim is that the overall result is more just, not every ideal or aspiration can be met. This shows why the metaphor of justice is the balancing of scales (between different ideas of good and harm) and explains why the theory of consent identifies the moral duty of beneficence as essential but not sufficient to forming consent.

The first challenge for design practice that was revealed in the cases was an absence of participatory design processes that specifically discharged justice. This was interpreted in the two cases as being due to constraints on design professionalism which were introduced to assure designers' autonomy.

The second challenge was that the way in which designed changes can coerce participants to act contrary to their existing values and beliefs is not currently made explicit. For example, in Case 1, Aro Valley, the design drawings for 'the pinch point' prioritised the values of adult cyclists over caregivers and children. Children and their caregivers were coerced in the sense that their values and beliefs about the place were absent from the spatial design configuration. This left them using a higher risk route out of the childcare centre. In Case 2, Grønne Park, the planting on 'the slope' represented the values of an ethnic Dane and municipal policies, rather than the values of the children of Mjølnerparken, who were in effect coerced to move through the landscape in a way that did not meet their needs or aspirations.

This recognition of the asymmetrical power exerted through design participation practices such as drawings led to a novel feature in the framework, which is that the bottom half of the diagram demonstrates how coercion is expressed in the participatory process. This is a

significant departure from the existing literature on informed consent which focuses on reaching an ideal pathway for informed consent (the top half of the framework). It is notable that the Landscape Architecture and Urban Design literature already places considerable emphasis upon local disruption of the professional design process (Calderon, 2013, 2019; Carr, 2012; Clausen, 2017; Connelly, 2010). This may be due to the contingent complexity of design settings, or because conflict and implicit coercion is recognised as a problem but not well understood.

Overall, this novel departure of including both consent and coercion in the framework means the informed consent framework is more valuable within the complex, contingent spatial design context. It clearly shows the interrelationship between constructive and coercive aspects of informed consent, which can disrupt the design team's expected *course of action,* as in the stalling of the design process (Case 1, Aro Valley), or in the creation of an increasingly segregated landscape (Case 2, Grønne Park). Justice demands the rebalancing and reallocation of resources according to values and beliefs on a theoretical level. The two sides of the informed consent framework show the practical ramifications of developing justice in a particular place and time.

7.1.1 Applications of the theoretical framework to design practice

The Framework of Informed Consent can also be used when landscape and urban design teams are working on a social justice orientated brief. The framework can enable the design team to model, monitor or evaluate 'how' a participatory design process develops design drawings that respond to social justice goals and:

- Articulate for reflection how the design team's values and beliefs are informing the project and whether they are appropriate to their professional role within the grammar of consent. For instance, in both the Aro and Superkilen cases it would have revealed how designers are taking on a pseudo-local role in the projects, conflating their professional values with their own understanding of local values, and marginalising other local values.

- Identify whose values and beliefs about a place are supported or coerced by the design process and drawings. This understanding can enable the design team to discuss the ramifications of their normal design practices for clients, stakeholders and peers, asking: is it necessary? Is there a need to mitigate the risks and harm of coercion? How can we manage our practice better?
- Suggest an appropriate pathway for consent which can be negotiated and shared as a rationale for the project.
- Support an appropriate person (designer, client or other stakeholders) in mitigating the 'transitional harm' of the design process and the construction process (e.g., support for business during construction or from the designed place, cycle lessons for children, travel planning and e-bike purchase schemes). It can also highlight the permanent harms introduced or not resolved by design (e.g., excluding accessible parking spaces outside a chemist).

The Framework of Informed Consent therefore explicitly frames a discussion on how to re-allocate and develop landscape and spatial justice. This is different from designers arbitrating between *benefits and harms* in an opaque fashion. It is a theoretically grounded but practical, explicit and potentially collaborative, multi-perspective approach that can handle the complexity of an imminent process, such as professional participatory design, intervening in the complexity of immanent local relationships to place. It also provides conceptual support for a significant shift from the relationship between local people and design being procedural to being focused on governance.

That is not to say individual perspectives could not co-opt the framework and its concepts to serve particular interests. As discussed in Chapter 2, Theoretical Framework – reflexivity is necessary but not always sufficient (Bennett 2021; Greenwood, 1993; Lamm & Wagner, 2020; Schön, 1983, 1990; Smyth, 1989). A consideration of how procedures would need to change will be further developed in later sections.

Overall, the Framework of Informed Consent provides a theoretical and conceptual approach that aligns Landscape Architecture and Urban Design with other disciplines that use consent – noting that participation is not their primary tool but is just one that sits underneath a broader methodology of informed consent. All forms of professional practices are coming under the

scrutiny of informed consent and this has allowed nuance to develop in other disciplines about the use of local participation. It is also common for new professional perspectives to be progressively integrated into Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, for example: ecology, biosecurity and cultural advisors in indigenous worldviews, both via specialists joining the design team and subsequent integration into professional training and practice. A reasonable next step would be further research that trialled this framework within design studios to examine how it can be integrated to serve mainstream design practice. This would likely require specialist mentorship to ensure that informed consent's rich concepts are applied and further developed with nuance and appropriate complexity. One output from this trial would be a training programme for practitioners not dissimilar to those created to accelerate the integration of ecological practices into design.

7.2 Methodological Contribution- implications for participatory design research

A critical methodological challenge of this study was how to undertake field investigations and interpretations involving an interdisciplinary conceptual lens that focuses on supporting justice for human agents, to a design discipline where the locus of decision-making is physical and spatial changes to landscapes and cities. It was necessary for the approach to be methodological (see Chapter 3 Methodology) and moved beyond standard methods for studying human/non-human in Landscape Architecture and Urban Design (Gehl 2013).

The response required a methodology that articulated and interpreted the interactions between humans and between humans and non-humans. To achieve this, Actor-Network Theory and Grounded Theory were used to analyse and interpret the Case Study data.

In Case 1, Aro Valley, individual key informant interviews were first analysed using a Grounded Theory (GT) approach to 'construct' the human experience of participatory design. Actor Network Theory (ANT) was then used to interpret how each key informant influenced and was influenced by broader human and non-human interactions. In Case 2, Grønne Park, the first step was to use ANT to interpret the photographic evidence of interactions between human and landscape agents that shaped the experience of landscape. GT was then used to interpret the meanings of these interactions for the human participants, based upon key informant

interviews. This combined approach successfully highlighted how alignments and divergences between actors influenced the course of the participatory design process, supporting the completion of the Framework diagrams.

This combined approach could be applied in other studies of informed consent within established disciplines such as law and medicine, to expand their understanding of the agency of non-human actors (e.g., contracts, information leaflets and medication). ANT is already being applied within Architecture (Innes & Booher, 1999; Boonstra, 2015; Farias & Bender, 2010; Murphy, 2016, 2017; Tietjen & Jørgensen, 2016), and in combination with GT could also be applied to other research investigations within Landscape Architecture, foregrounding both human and non-human agency in the design of landscapes. This study's use of ANT drew particular attention to the influence of graphic representations of the place.

The introduction of ANT focused on following the actors over time and between spaces. This led to the identification of influential interactions that took place prior to participatory design procedures. For instance, it showed how (Case 1, Two Gum Trees) prior activism influenced the participatory design process. Taking cognisance of this in Case 2, the study started by examining the designed landscape, comparing it to the graphic representations – and identifying differences which were then interpreted. This exemplifies a methodological approach for interconnecting how a place is designed, with the local relationships to place before and after design. This has been key to evaluating the efficacy of design practice and is a considerable shift from the habitual procedural focus of many studies of participatory design, and the practice focus of spatial design disciplines. The study therefore developed the interpretative scope of Grounded Theory beyond the agency of humans with non-humans playing a supportive role, to recognition of the non-human agencies that shape the particularities of a place.

In both cases, a novel approach to the 'story-lining' method, produced 'episodes' that both described and interpreted the influential interactions across the relevant times and spaces.

This approach resolved ANT's challenge to GT's synchronic tendencies. This interconnection between constructing and assembling an interpretation of interactions has shown significant potential which can be pursued by other studies as the nature of the non-human actors, for

example, landscape elements, design drawings and other required visual methods that are uncommon in GT but can further extend its scope.

Finally, a novel contribution of this study to Landscape Architecture and Urban Design was the explicit use of axiology to support the integration of practice-based phronesis. This focus on values illustrates an approach to integrating non-designer perspectives into Landscape Architecture and Urban Design research and so challenges the frequently normative positioning of design process and designer within design scholarship, by making disciplinary values and beliefs explicit.

7.3 Substantive Contribution - implications for participatory design practice, and for future research

This section critically reviews the key insights into participatory design process and practice drawn out in the Discussion Chapter, identifying implications for future research and practice. These are insights derived from applying the Framework of Informed Consent to the evidence on the nature and meaning of human–nonhuman interactions in the two cases of participatory design. They illustrate the framework's potential to provide a substantive contribution to Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. Specifically, the Framework shifts critical attention from centring either designers or local people in the participatory design process, and instead considers how professionals and local people can practice better *together*. This section will first examine the implications for participatory design of embracing the persistence of the local relationship to place; and finally, this section will finish with some recommendations for how to do that.

7.3.1 The implications of embracing the persistence of the local relationship to place

This study has identified a lack of clarity in participatory design about roles, agency and their relationship to place at the interface between local people and design professionals. The cases both show that design teams and local people compete for a normative, ideal role at the centre

of a participatory design process - and neither can achieve it in the context of heterogeneous, contingent empowerment.

The wider theoretical and applied investigation has also revealed how participatory design procedures and practice are primarily focused on establishing design expertise in statutory and municipal contexts that formally require design participation, rather than enhancing local democracy. As a result, design team decisions do not adequately consider the local people's relationship to place in how and what they design. A consequence is that local people may turn to other sources of autonomy to prevent those design decisions from being built, and/or the design decisions do not persist in the landscape after the participatory design process has finished.

Chapter 2, The Theoretical Framework, examined how design expertise focuses on design thinking, as an abductive approach to transforming wicked problems into valued proposals (Dorst, 2011; Hoddinott et al., 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Roozenburg, 1995). Design also includes other expertise in a wide range of landscape processes and features that combine to form a prosperous place, for example: identity, mobility, play, heritage, planting and ecology (the processes and features that the episodes focused on) (Hester, 2006; Swaffield, 2002). By working with the Framework of Informed Consent, it has become clear that designers see their role as being to *design decisions* that *do good and reduce harm*, and they work to assure their own professional autonomy to achieve that goal. However, this can lead them to side-step processes that develop local justice, which then seeds local disruption and limits the application of design expertise.

This insight is critical to design teams and those commissioning participatory design processes, and in particular in briefs that are focused on developing social justice. If participatory design neglects the processes that lead to a *transformation of injustices,* then *it* leaves those dynamics unresolved and disruptive. This explains why scholars have observed that participatory design is most successful in situations where there is no need to define new justices, where there is clear and stable local consensus on the *just* way forward (and the design team concur with that consensus) (Calderon, 2013; Carr, 2012).

This may also explain why the influence of participatory design has been unexpectedly transient and partial on the local relationship to place. In contrast, local relationships to place have persisted. Recognising and respecting this is key to developing participatory design – via a more humble, new generation of designers (Slavin, 2016). Humble yet appropriately assertive of their design expertise.

So how can mainstream participatory design practices be better aligned with these local autonomies? A small number of studies were noted, in Landscape Architecture and Urban design and adjacent disciplines, that take primary consideration of the local perspective – including marginalised perspectives whose neglect has seeded and supported wider inequity and injustice (Arnstein, 1972; Bennett, 2021; Carr, 2012; Castiglioni & Ferrario, 2018; Glackin & Dionisio 2016; Joks & Law, 2017; Jones, 2007; Laet & Mol, 2000; Larsen & Johnson, 2017; Williams, 2014). However, this scholarship is not central to the discipline, an issue that this study signals needs urgent redress.

Nor does it deal with the challenge of co-empowering local people and professionals within complex contingent contexts of change, and the need to also develop democracy and justice. However, Participatory Development Studies have focused on these concerns for decades, (Chambers, 2017; Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006; Cowen & Shenton, 1996; Hickey & Mohan, 2004), identifying that justice requires professionals to take account of the local immanent practices and processes (historical and existing processes of social change) (Cowen & Shenton, 1996). They also consider how to appropriately empower imminent (focused on specific projects for social change – such as a design project) professional processes and practices. This literature has potential to support a shift in the current focus in the design literature and cases, from design procedures that support the inclusion of local people to a configuration of roles that support the professionals working together with local people in their context.

This Participatory Development Studies literature is rich, nuanced and extensive. It does not position participation in terms of ideals, but considers participation pragmatically, considering a wide array of practices and practitioners (for example, Cornwall & Coehlo, 2006; Hickey & Mohan, 2004), and their benefits and limitations. These include the impact of the indiscriminate use of participation as a social good without a strong evidence base – described

as a 'tyranny of participation' without pragmatic recourse (Cooke & Kothari, 2001, Title Page). Participatory Development Studies therefore presents an untapped direction for Landscape Architecture and Urban Design and suggests the need for further critical studies into the relevance of seminal thinking in this field to Landscape Architecture and Urban Design.

However, this broadening of focus alone will not be sufficient in a discipline where participation is not a core and central concern. As Chambers (2017) examined, there is also a need for overarching professional methodologies that manage the asymmetries of power of professional/lay interactions. This study has explored the use of one approach, informed consent, as a conceptual research tool.

To practice together, in the configuration of informed consent, means that participatory design is no longer a process that designers or local people define. Nor can designers claim the role of the local person (as seen in both cases), or locals completely take control of a design process in which they have inadequate wider skills or knowledge (as design teams feared in both cases). There is instead a need for a place of practice focused on process; a 'How Team'. A How Team would work together to consider *how* to design in a specific place. It would plan together, and then respond and adapt the participatory design process to contingencies during design. The Framework of Informed Consent therefore becomes a collaborative monitoring and planning tool for participatory design.

The primary role of a How Team would be to steward the *process of inquiry* into how to transform the place at the focus of the project. They would also recognise where the proposed *course of action* requires that other settings, (e.g., national policies or local relationships), be adjusted and would consider to what extent that is possible or alternatively those settings are accepted as social constraints on the spatial process. For example, Grønne Park was expected to put the residents of Mjølnerparken first. To achieve this, the residents needed more than the designed landscape. They needed a change in policing practices ('The White Wall'). They required their neighbours to trust them ('The Fence'). They needed municipal Co-Creation Policies to recognise and empower them ('The Slope'). They needed a rethink of national social housing policy ('The Intersection'). Without these shifts, the design made no sense; it spoke to social settings that did not exist. In summary, you can build it but they can't come – so the design is not *just*.

How Team membership might include those influential in the overlapping contexts of spatial design, for example respected local leaders (focused on how to design here, not what to design). In Case 1, Aro Valley, the co-governance group takes a similar role of guiding the process. It would also include expertise in the settings that effect the locale (e.g., designers and municipal staff), and others (e.g., social housing providers). Together they can integrate professional design processes and practices into place, and interconnect design with wider participatory and social processes. Together they can plan for the inevitable collateral harm done when rebalancing different ideas of *good* – investigating how best to respond by asking; is that harm transitional or permanent? Is it warranted and unavoidable? If so, how can it be mitigated – are there social or government programmes that would help? For instance, in discussions about a cycleway, there may be a case for retaining a parking space outside a chemist.

This critical process approach pivots the design team (and indeed scholars) from being normative bystanders experiencing (and rationalising) pre-existing community dynamics (e.g., Hester 2006; Pena et al 2017; Till 2010; Richardson and Connelly 2005) to becoming overtly political actors (e.g., Biddulph, 2012; Calderon, 2013; Flyvberg, 1998; Slavin, 2016). This points away from pre-planned participatory design processes – sometimes referred to, in the public sector, as the 'Consultation (or Participation) Pathways' (IAP2, 2014), to more adaptive participatory design processes. These adaptive processes would guide the application of more agile, bespoke constellations of design practices that could, for example mediate when professionals have raised local concerns (or vice versa), adjust the *process of inquiry*, and regain local alignment. This is a more appropriate approach when the context of design is contingent and complex (Calderon, 2013; Carr, 2012; Flyvberg, 1998; Slavin, 2016).

An implication for design is that instead of a place being abstracted into a site, it becomes a place collectively known where designers improvise, with consent, a responsive *process of inquiry* and editing to define a consented *course of action*. To achieve this, local people become immanent hosts in a place where an intervening, professional design process is being introduced – a distinct and different work to (also necessary) the imminent role of a professional client who manages the delivery of the professional design process. This is a fundamental shift from the status quo, where the design team effectively hosts local people in their process. The analogy of hosting is deliberately chosen, as it implies not only the

gatekeeper and steward (roles which could exist alongside a host but focus more on 'what' is designed) but also someone who provides welcome, kindness and sustenance to visitors whilst also defining the terms of invitation; what they have permission to do in a place. Pursuing this in future research, would nuance the framings of the 'local host' as an interpretation of the lay role in informed consent.

7.3.2 The significance of site practices as guiding the *process of inquiry*

Another key insight from the case studies was that site practices (signified in the *course of action* inscribed in design drawings) were unexpectedly influential in the shaping of consent. They inhibited both the local democratisation of design, and the professional practice of design. For example, in Case 1, Aro Valley, 'The Two Gum Trees' the design drawings excluded landscape features that empowered the identity of the place – including an area within the site itself. The established participation procedures were an inadequate response to the limitations of these site practices and it was the co-governance group who were most influential and stalled the design process. This type of outcome was not anticipated in the literature, or by the design teams.

Kahn and Burns (2021) identified that professional site practices (such as mediating design through drawings) were a way for the design teams to assume control of an area. From defining a site, the designer begins and sustains their practices to read and edit the place (Meyer, 2021). The case studies have revealed that site practices also have an under-recognised impact on the local community relationships to place. Misalignment between practice and place led to a disrupted design process (Case 1, Aro Valley) and an unstable designed landscape (Case 2, Aro Valley).

The cases revealed how the design teams believed professional site practices to be normative and rational. However, their site practices did not adequately engage with the area as a place either first, or last (given that a site is a temporary practice), and site practices did not adequately acknowledge the heterogeneous, overlapping local relationships to place (Beauregard, 2021; Bennett 2021; Glackin & Dionisio 2016; Larsen & Johnson, 2017). Indeed, it is fair to argue that site practices as revealed in the two cases are more about professional

control than local consent. This raises a question for future research, to what extent is professional control the opposite to local consent, and when and where is professional control appropriate? This is the reverse of the approach in both cases where there was a tacit assumption of professional control within which opportunities for local participation may be added, and no consideration of the local experience of control, and the impact of that on future interactions.

Similarly, Burns & Kahn (2021) argue that there hasn't been significant critical attention to site concerns and recent scholarship continues to consider 'site' from the perspective of design scholars rather than communities. In contrast, 'place' has been extensively considered from a local perspective, including marginalised perspectives (Appleyard 1980; Bennett 2021; Cresswell, 1996, 2002; Glackin & Dionisio 2016; Larson & Johnson 2017; Williams, 2014; Yates 2021). There is therefore a need to establish if there is sufficient balance in both the education of and definition of 'Landscape Architect' between the practices and procedures of site and the conceptualisation of local places, including related marginalisation and injustices via place. An implication of this study is the need to further research from a local community perspective, the interface of site and place, asking; how does a community of place experience the professional focus on site? How does the definition of site through practice relate to the local meanings of place? And how can site practices adapt to interact with the consent of the local relationship to place? This study included some initial responses in the form of reflective questions for practitioners (see Findings Chapter) and now a proposition for a How Team that includes local 'hosts' to ensure these concerns are an integral part of any design process in the place.

7.3.3 Design drawings as the primary way to signify a *course of action*

Lastly, the insight of the role of design drawings in shaping future action. In applying the Framework of Informed Consent to design, any *course of action* shaped through design needs explicit *signification* that can be the subject of consent. The case studies established that site design drawings are the primary approach to *signification* within Landscape Architecture and Urban Design and are therefore a crucial and sensitive part of shaping consent.

In the cases, design professionals used concept design drawings as a tool to engage with local people and intended that local feedback would inform the design team's subsequent work. In contrast, in Case 1, Aro Valley, local people considered the design drawings through their lens; their current and aspired relationship to place. When viewed through this unexpected lens, the design drawings were lacking in critical respects, for example the perspective of caregivers at a play park entrance (the visual perspective of the drawing from a cyclists' perspective, down the pathway, excluded their social perspective from the playpark gate). In both cases, the design teams focused the local people on decisions about details and elements represented in the design drawings, not spatial (and so social) inter-relationships. This approach is at odds with the Case Study findings that local spatial relationships (i.e., the relationship of local people to place) are essential to informed consent. In acknowledging the existence of heterogeneous local relationships to place, including marginalised perspectives, it follows that there are multiple local experiences of the intervention of the *course of inquiry*, and multiple experiences of the designed *course of action* – that all inform the formation of experiences of justice and so consent/

Unpacking these local experiences seems a vital stage in a design process that integrates with the local relationship to place and responds to concerns with marginalisation and justice. In practice this would include identifying and mitigating any harms done – including to what extent they are transitional (i.e., local people can adapt to a course of action which will develop overall justice, such as planning an alternate route to work when a cycleway is put in place) or permanent (i.e. the removal of a parking space outside a chemist to accommodate a cycleway). This explicit conversation about those that loose existing privileges in the course of rebalancing justice, opens the door to mitigations in the form of social and physical programmes (e.g., advance communication of road changes with route planning advice).

In addition, the use of design stages to guide the preparation of design drawings was unhelpful to the participatory approach. The design teams worked from large to small scale, but this did not align with the local relationship to place, which consisted of undrawn heterogeneous, overlapping areas (e.g., play, heritage, identity, mobility and planting). Many of these areas encompassed meaning-rich actors. These were (undrawn or underdrawn) landscape elements (denoted in the names of the episodes) which interconnected the area to other places and people. In Case 1, Aro Valley, the large to small scale drawing practices contributed to the

disruption of the process. The lack of 'Aro-ness' was an early local concern. The design team expected this to be resolved in the aesthetics of the details, but local people raised the same problem again with later drawings. They noted that the designs did not inscribe their current, or aspired to, relationship to place. At this stage, the design team did not have the resource to start their 'large to small' progression of drawings again and considered this feedback as outside the constraints of the process.

These insights suggest a need to develop new drawing processes and practices for participatory design, or to repurpose existing ones. In particular, the cases indicates that the translation from place to site needs to be consented to (for example, by the How Team/local hosts) – and so have its own drawing practices guided by professional codes of conduct (as in other disciplines that consider informed consent). So to start, designers would be sufficiently skilled to attune their drawing practices to depict the complexity of local relationships to place, for instance 'thick' drawings with multiple, layers depicting distinct and potentially dissonant relationships. This process of drawing as signifying, and so understanding together the pre-existing heterogeneity of a place would happen prior to starting to define sites for professional design actions. It sets in motion a process of drawing a place that becomes a practice of shared evolution of how to rebalance 'goods' to develop justice – leading to a course of action being signified that shows a collectively understood (consented to) future, valued, relationship to place. It also provides the opportunity to collectively define 'sites' for action within a place.

However, whilst drawing practices may have signified the problems, they are not sufficient to resolving them. The cases indicate a need to revisit the current professional guidance on linear design stages. To what extent can design practice shift from a 'form' defined by linear design stages that have defined the habit of big spatial moves before detailing and instead, adopt adaptive processes that better align with a local relationship to place - and their processes and practices. This is not a new concern, for example it is addressed in Parnell's (2013) work on the social value of the City Architect, who has an on-going relationship to local people and places, and it underpins policies such as 'Co-Create Copenhagen' (Københavns Kommune, 2015). But it needs further attention in the context of participatory design of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design processes. For instance, research is needed to explore and develop different design processes for different local contexts. This study concludes that the current model of linear design stages is more appropriate for the relatively stable context (e.g., designing a

garden for a small group of residents in an aged care facility). But for a socially complex shift (e.g., to active mobility), a different process and indeed pace is proposed. The result would be typologies of process that design teams can discuss with their clients, enabling an early investigation of the contingencies in a place, and more accurate resourcing of design teams working within socially complex contexts. This would include recommendations for who else design teams need in their 'team'. Both case studies showed that design teams understanding of participation is currently inadequate – so would require external expertise to deliver and model good practice.

This study returns repeatedly to how persistent the ongoing dynamics of the wider place are, for example between local people from adjacent areas, between local people and policing practices and social housing policies. So, design teams (or better still – 'How Teams') need practices to investigate how different local autonomies interact and how to transform them via a designed relationship to the landscape. This is a shift away from an aspirational, designed future, into considering how to develop a social practice of change for the local relationship to place, or to work within a wider practice of social change and extend it to spatial and physical change. This includes dissolving the separation between 'the social' and 'the physical and spatial' – especially as this separation appears to be driven by creating 'sites' for professional skillsets.

7.4 The Way Forward (isn't walking in another's shoes).

The conclusion of this thesis is a pragmatic one. The local relationship to place is influential and persistent and also fundamental to develop democracy and justice. Given the mainstreaming of public participation, it is an unavoidable reality that design practices need to take account of.

The aim of mainstream Participatory Design practice is not solely to disrupt the status quo, as it could be argued activist practices did. Instead, the intent is to apply a professional approach that transforms the physical and spatial problems that generate injustice. This requires mainstream Landscape Architecture and Urban Design to re-position itself as a moral and democratic profession. To achieve this there is a need for, as Slavin (2016) proposed: a

humbling of the profession. This thesis has examined how to inhabit a humbler professional identity, with informed consent. The overall conclusion is that to achieve that, designers need to interconnect with places beyond their objects and space. This opens up a more assertive, collaborative future where Landscape Architects and Urban Designers work more humbly within our democracies. To achieve this, they need to be able to design with local people *how justice is designed*, expertly applying agile practices and adaptive processes to complex and contingent social, spatial, and physical contexts. This responsiveness is not for its own capricious sake, or indeed (as this study has shown) to assure the design team's primacy. It needs to be accompanied by a review of the profession's identity and fundamental tools (e.g., design stages). But more than all, Landscape Architecture and Design needs to work within a higher-level ethical framework, such as informed consent – so that the profession is practically able to contribute to a democratic and just society.

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