



Nygård's Kindergarten

Reflections for a Design



Fig.1 : Cover, Alessandro Vino

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Abstract

The following dissertation is a path of thoughts and considerations based on a real ongoing architectural project of a kindergarten. The design of the project itself goes on the background, leaving the front picture to the ideology behind a kindergarten's project. The paper consists of several chapters, starting with client's identity and expectations; briefly introducing the history of kindergartens. Passing by the Scandinavian nurseries and my personal experiences in the early age. Short interviews are proposed as external perspective and hints for the future design. The final design has the responsibility to meet client's expectations; for such reason I left space for some extra and more academic thoughts that may lead to a different proposal. The paper however wants to focus on how to collect ideas for a design rather than presenting a finished one...

"There is no bad weather, only bad clothing,"

A special thanks to..

..Frode Røynesdal and BKF for entrusting me with the responsibility of the projects and the chance to step up for the first time in the profession. Geraldine for the inspiring courage, Angelo and Ketty for never questioning my actions and each single friend that encouraged me to pursuit this path despite the difficult times. Thanks to the Landscape department at SLU for hosting me during the academic year 2005 / 2006.

0.1 Background

In 2001 I began my academic path in Landscape Architecture in Genova, after four semesters I won an ERASMUS scholarship, I joined the former KVL University in Denmark as exchange student for two semesters. After the Danish experience I took the decision to transfer my credits from Italy and Denmark to Sweden, at SLU in Alnarp. During the Academic year 2005/2006 I was enrolled at SLU as guest student; after two semesters of courses I commenced the work for the Bachelor thesis. The final examination evolved around a competition to design a space for young people; the aim was to prove that a good design could help young people to solve some social issues, such as political apathy, vandalism, education problems and marginalizations. The Bachelor degree took a long and intricate path which ended in 2009 without reaching the requested criteria to pass. In 2010, during a short professional experience as Landscape Architect in Norway, I decided to start a new Bachelor thesis from scratch. The experience in Norway lead me to deal with a project of a new Kindergarten in Bergen; I therefore contacted SLU once again to set in motion this new Bachelor thesis.

0.2 Objective

Through this paper I would like to present a series of personal considerations and proposals related to kindergartens philosophy and design. The questions are the keys of this paper, in fact I wish to focus the attention to the ideology rather than the design. If possible I would like to understand and discover how much Landscape Architecture and related disciplines can influence preschool education.

0.3 Method

In order to fulfil my objectives I shall read related articles and books, some of which could be used as reference in the chapters. I intend to use the net as it's a great source of informations; looking for related projects which may have some unique features for children's education. In the final chapter I will present some solutions linked to my work in Norway and to my own ideologies. Hand sketches and computer graphic is going to be included in these pages to show the range of ideas that followed and in some cases anticipated, this essay.

1.1 Client and requirements

This chapter is introducing client expectations and the project requirements. As wrote in the previous chapter, this essay evolves around an ongoing project in Bergen, Norway. The aim of the project is to build a brand new kindergarten in Laksevåg, a neighbourhood included in Bergen municipality. Most municipalities in Norway have a council that plan, organise and manage all aspects related to Churches and Kindergartens within their territory. Bergen is no exception; the project for the new Kindergarten in Laksevåg is taken in charge by "**Bergen Kirkeelige Fellesråd**" (Bergen joint Parish Council), better known as **BKF**.

BKF is a regional financed independent public body established in 1997 managing the following tasks:

- Management, maintenance and planning of building, facilities and outdoors belonging to Churches, Graveyards and Kindergartens.
- Finance management for Churches.
- Employment resource for the 25 Churches of the council.

With its 420 employees spread in the Hordaland region, BKF is divided into several departments. The **Planning** department is divided into a **Building** and a **Landscape** unit. Each team has a Leader in charge of a certain number of employees.

The **Planning** department shall handle most of the tasks related to Nygård's kindergarten. **BKF** needs to plan and build the nursery with a budget of 20'000'000 Norwegian Kroner (approximately 2'500'000 Euro). #1

Architect Siri Øijord Haugan is leading the Building design. Frode Røynesdal is in charge of the Landscape team, his task is to design the outdoor area for the kindergarten. Once the design is complete, Paul Marhaug, leader of the Building unit shall direct the construction of the whole site.

Up to May 2010 Frode Røynesdal has been the only Landscape Architect present at BKF; however the number of projects rapidly increased and some extra help was needed for the Landscape unit. At this point I join BKF as assistant Landscape Designer, from May to November 2010. I was assigned to various design tasks, such as the outdoor area for Nygård and two new Graveyards outside Bergen.

Along side with Mrs. Haugan, I worked on the preliminary design concept for both Buildings and outdoor. The Planning department at Hordaland's region set a list of guidelines regarding the minimum requirement of square metres in Kindergartens :

- The indoor living area requires a minimum of 4 m² per children over 3 year old and 5,3 m² for children under 3 year old.
- The outdoor area per child is set to 4,5 m² for children over 3 years old and 5,5 m² for children under 3 years old.
- The area needs to include 1 parking lot each 0,25 child, staff included.
- An adult (tutor/teacher) is in charge of 6 children from 1 to 3 year old and up to 12 from 3 to 6 year old.

In addition to the municipal guidelines there are some basic requests from Mrs. Helen Stanghelle; leader of the **Kindergarten** department at BKF. Mrs. Stanghelle is an experienced tutor, she has therefore a better knowledge of how children behave at the nursery. These are some of her requests to be included in the design :

- A playground for children to 1 to 3 year old needs to be in close proximity of the building and easy access in case of need.
- A playground for 3 to 6 year old children should include a fence/gate to separate them from the younger ones in order to avoid conflicts.

- Outdoor installations need to vary in size, shape and use. Climbing installations are very appreciated.
- Parents expect their children to be in a shelter when taking their nap. The shelter should not be insulated and need to host children from 1 to 3 years old.

There are also more ethical requirements from the Norwegian Education Ministry : *“the kindergarten’s physical surroundings must have qualities that stimulate motor development through play and physical display; this shall be safe for children of different age groups. Outdoor areas must be suitable, both in design and size, for varied play and display under secure conditions “.*

The regulations for environmental safety in kindergartens and schools (of 1 December 1995 § 9) also regulate the requirements for the design and decoration of the outside area. The Norwegian Board of Health states that the outdoor in kindergartens and schools should be designed so that they provide good opportunities for play, social contact and recreation during all seasons and in all types of weather. Furthermore, the kindergarten should encourage user participation (Tutors and Parents) both in the planning, design and maintenance of outdoor areas. The latter statement means that the kindergarten should discuss the outside area with the Councils (SU) and the Parents Council, but that it does not have an obligation to do so. #2

1.2 Site description

The purpose of this chapter is to present the project site in relation to the city. As explained earlier Nygård is a small neighbourhood included in Laksevåg district in Bergen. The district hosts 38’000 inhabitants, the 14% of Bergen’s population (260’000 inhabitants registered in 2010). #3

Fig.2 : Bergen location in Norway.



Laksevåg merged with Bergen in 1972 together with other municipalities such as Arna, Fana and Åsane. The old Laksevåg borough includes residential areas on the hillside of Damsgårdsfjellet facing Puddefjorden. By the fjord, there are several industrial buildings, many used by maritime industries. There is a rococo manor, Damsgård Hovedgård, located 2,5 Km south east from the project site.

Fig.3 : Bergen city.



Laksevåg is connected to Bergen city centre by the Nygård bridge renewed in 2008 with two extra lanes and a new tunnel below sea level.

Most of the neighbourhoods in Laksevåg consist of residential buildings. The area has a relatively low density, the new kindergarten won't affect in any way the traffic concentrated on **Kringsjøveien**. The kindergarten is intended to be a nursery for "locals": most of the applicants are within walking distance from the site.

Fyllingen (see previous map), the hill "splitting" Nygård by the rest of Laksevåg, includes some residential buildings. But most of it is covered by vegetation, creating a charming background visible from the project site. Due to the morphology of the area, the site is affected by strong winds at certain times of the day. The current is channelled between



Above image shows the main features within 1 Km radius from the project site. Despite the residential buildings, the area presents some recreational area mainly used for sports by students living in the residence South of the kindergarten. There is a primary school located in the North–West and some local maritime enterprises in the North–East on sea side.

Fyllingen and the top on Nygård (where the school is located) and runs mostly from Loddefjord (South) towards Bergen in the morning and tend to shift in late evening coming by the sea (North). However, the Kindergarten site is partially protected between the small hill, the existing nursery and some vegetation all located on a higher ground.

Fig.4 Above: Features around the site.

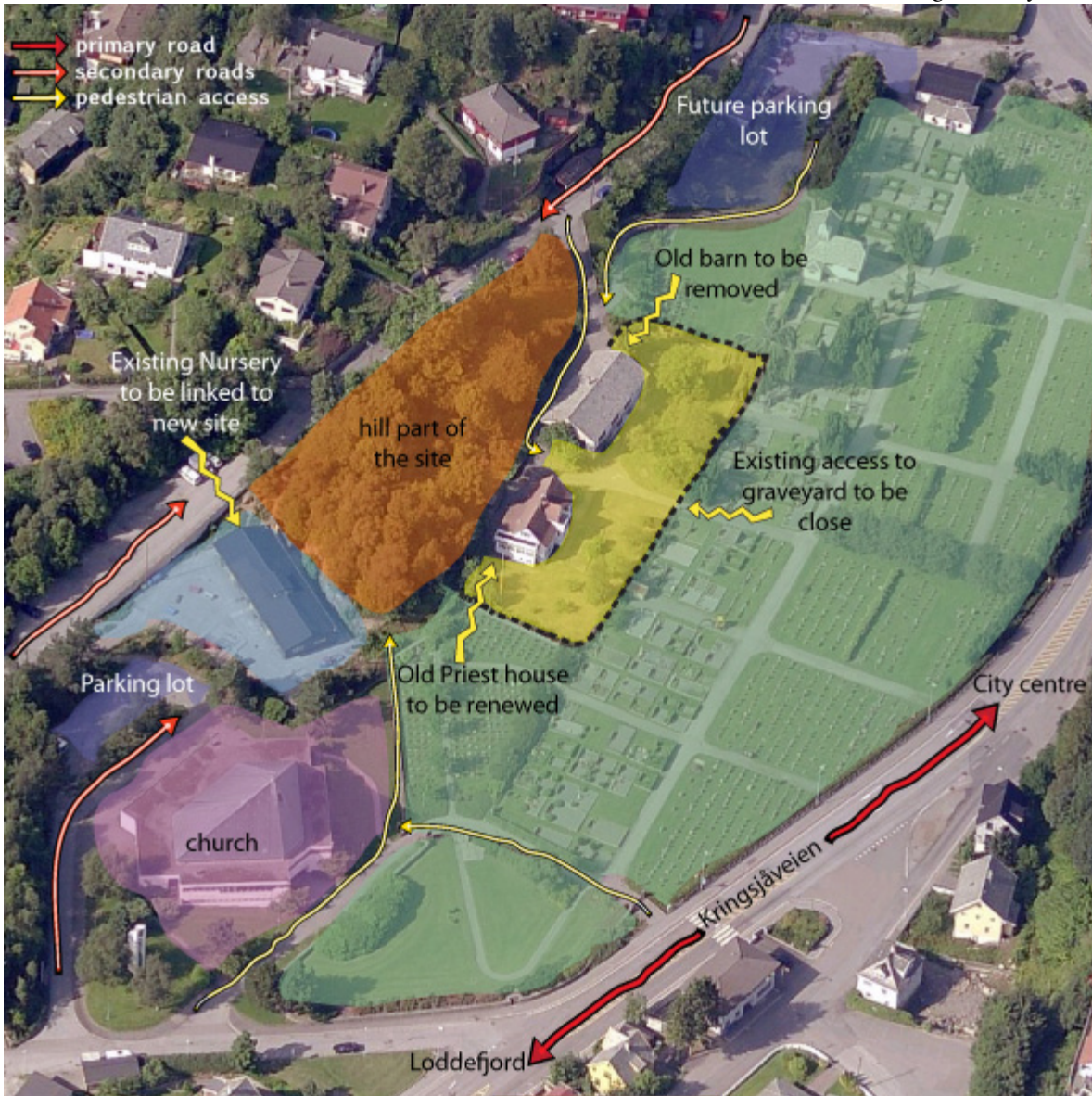
Fig.5 Below: Roads leading to the site.



Keeping the guidelines from chapter 1.1 in mind, I divided the overall surface for the diverse functions, knowing that BKF is expecting to create space for **56 children**. The project area (Fig.6) amounts to **4.700 m²**, the building named “**Priest house**” present on the yellow area is the old accommodation of the Vicar, this

Below map is North orientated, it means that the site is well illuminated by sun light for most of the day, this affected the positioning of the new building designed by Architect Siri Øijord Haugan. According to the tutors, working at the existing nursery, strong sunlight is problematic during warm days.

Fig.6 : Area functions on site.



covers a surface of **280 square metres** and shall be renewed to host a group of **20 children aged 3 to 6 years old**. The “Old Barn” building is to be removed, a new building with an approximate surface of **200 square metres** shall be placed in the upper right corner of the yellow area, this will host **36 children aged 1 to 3 years old divided among 4 units**. The area in orange shown in above map covers **2'500 square metres** and is not constructible as it represents the only “natural” element on site.

The existing nursery has the main façade facing south with little repair from sun light, creating issues for small children who needs to rest during the afternoon. This nursery is to be linked to the new site, creating one new kindergarten. There are several pedestrian access routes on site, a new parking lot shall be built by the north entrance of the graveyard; the existing parking lot could see an expansion in the future if part of the budget remains after project completion.

2.1 History of nurseries

Kindergarten, a word of Germanic origin which means “children’s garden”. The origin of the first kindergarten is slightly uncertain; in 1816, Robert Owen (philosopher and pedagogue) opened an infant school in New Lanark (UK). Few years later Samuel Wilderspin opened a similar one in London. Countess Theresa Brunsvik opened the first facility in Hungary in 1828 under the name of “Angel garden” in her private manor. This trend quickly spread throughout the Hungarian Kingdom, becoming popular among the nobility and middle class. The first real pre-school facility was however opened in Germany in 1837. Friederich Fröbe created the name kindergarten, the facility was founded in the village of Bad Blankenburg in Thuringia, Germany. The success of Fröbel’s institute led to the universal denomination of Kindergarten for this kind of facilities. #4

In 1856, Margarethe Schurz opened the first kindergarten in the United States, based on Fröbe principles. Initially the institution was meant for five children, teaching in German only. Later that year, the first English language kindergarten was opened in Boston. The first free kindergarten was founded in 1870 by Conrad Poppenhusen, a German industrialist who settled in College Point, New York, where he opened the Poppenhusen Institute, (still existing nowadays).

Elizabeth Harrison wrote extensively on the theory of early childhood education. She worked to enhance educational standards for kindergarten teachers by establishing what became the National College of Education in 1886.

In the history of kindergartens, there is a special page that I would like to develop further, the so called “Montessori approached”.

It began in Rome in 1907 when Maria Montessori (August 31, 1870 – May 6, 1952. Italian physician, educator and philosopher) opened the “Casa dei Bambini” (Children’s house). Children’s House was a child care institution in an apartment building in San Lorenzo, a poor neighbourhood of Rome. Montessori focused her attention on teaching the students ways to develop their own skills, which was a principle she called “spontaneous self-development”. A wide variety of special equipment of increasing complexity is used to help direct the interests of the child and hasten development. When a child is ready to learn new tasks, the teacher guides the child in order to avoid too much effort and learning wrong habits; still the child learns most of it alone. It has been reported that the Montessori method has enabled children to learn to read and write much quicker and with greater ease than had otherwise been possible.

These methods, nowadays commonly used in child care, were developed from concepts such as “Inner guide of nature”; children have innate sense coming from their nature that will guide them through a development. “Observation and indirect teaching”; the teacher observes and then guides children to a new challenges. “Absorbent mind”, children naturally incorporate experiences from their environment. “Multi- age grouping” children learn from each other in spontaneous ways, this helps to develop their own and unique personality. The “Prepared environment”, different material organized in a crescent level of difficulty but still available at any time, the child decides himself when starting a new challenge. These and many other concepts were developed by Montessori. Nowadays her method is still regarded to be one of the best and most developed guideline for child care all over the world.#5

2.2 The outdoor philosophy

While at SLU I had the opportunity to travel in some parts of Sweden for diverse purposes. I can't recall the topic, but I clearly remember that during a certain field trip, we crossed path with an outdoor nursery. Up to that precise moment, it never occurred to me that children could actually spend most of their time outdoors during their stay at the nursery. At first, there was a sense of concern: how are those children handling the wilderness? Isn't it too dangerous to let them run wild in any weather condition? What if they fall while attempting to climb a tree? Concerned thoughts rushed to my head. Shortly after, I realized these concerns were linked to my roots: I did not spend my time in the nursery outdoors climbing trees, building up installations with branches in the forest. We'd rather play indoors and even when outdoor we would wonder around in a "safe" and defined space.

Back to my discovery of the Scandinavian outdoor philosophy. As I recall one of the tutors explained to us how children can benefit from outdoor nursery. It is proven that spending a certain amount of time outdoors at an early age decreases the chance to encounter physical complications during adulthood. The benefits associated with regular physical exercise during childhood involve humour, patience, energy, optimism, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-assurance, emotional stability, improved body-image.

How are these kindergartens arranged exactly? At first sight, it may appear to be just a random stroll in the woods. In reality, there are expert tutors involved and above all, parents are taking a major and active role in the process, which would not happen in a traditional nursery.

Most outdoor nurseries provide a shelter for the children in case of extreme weather condition, also to have a meeting point and ease the access to the parents. Most sites are chosen in proximity of residential areas with easy access to woodlands, even though the activities can also be arranged in meadows and beaches. Once the children are dropped off at the nursery the supervisors, together with the children themselves, are deciding in which part of the forest they should head. Typically, the tutors consider the distance according to the weather conditions. Once in the woods, kids are partially left to play around and take part in some exercises which vary on a daily basis.^{#6}

As I previously pointed out, parents are directly involved in the "building up" process of the nursery. It's common practice in Scandinavia that parents construct different structures and installations directly on the site. For instance, all outdoor nursery include a fireplace, one of the children's favourite feature. In Norway, this practice is called "Dugnad", which in fact means "volunteer".

These are no modern installations obviously, most structures are made of wood, stones and rope directly picked in situ. I believe this interaction with the parents creates a special bond among the nursery and the family. It should be easier to leave your own child growing in an environment you helped to shape.

Children are experiencing nature at its best. They go through seasonal changing, learning facts about plants and animals in their own environment. Tutors are explaining scientific facts through games and stories. ^{#7}



Fig.7 ; 8: "All children have their right to be outdoors" Mulleborg, Sweden. Source "I ur och Skur".



Fig.9 ; 10: Wooden hut & shelter with fireplace at Foldnes Kindergarten, Norway. Source : A.Vino.



The outdoor philosophy started in 1985. Siw Linde founded the first forest school in Sweden "I Ur och Skur". Behind this simple idea there's a specific pedagogical approach. The key, as already seen, is Nature. Children learn what Nature is and how to protect it. This learning is achieved by having fun in a diverse set of environments.#8

So far I have been focusing on the outdoor philosophy which is well established in Scandinavia. However, these outdoor nurseries are not the only ones present in those countries. Many children are in fact spending their kindergarten time in more "traditional" nurseries.

Swedish nurseries are considered to be among the best in Europe. This comes from the tutors' approach and the involvement with parents, a key factor. It lowers the fee for families and institutions which are 90% financed by the state. The journey begins with a full immersion for child and one of the parents, more often is the mother joining. In most cases, mother and child spend the first 3 days at the nursery. Everyone is participating at every level for this initial experience, they cook, play and sleep together.

Children go through a certain routine in the first days with the help from tutors and parents. They are not to force the child to do a certain task but, to encourage him every day until he gets used and becomes autonomous and collaborative. When children are scattered around a room playing individually, the approach is to slowly create a circle, sit down and singing together. Finally, communication is important: parent and tutor are talking directly to the child other than just talk about him. They bend down at their height and talk directly to him, this is done to create more attention and make the child feel more comfortable even if he/she has done something wrong.

The integration consolidating in these first days is extremely important. In other countries the kid is just "dropped" at the nursery and left to deal with the reality of it. In Sweden, the nurseries aim to create a special bond among parents, this will be the key to a better environment in the coming years. In fact, parents will work together to build or maintain a better facility for the community.

I had no chance to visit a modern nursery in Sweden, however, I had that chance in Norway. As soon as I arrived in Bergen, Frode Røynesdal, my supervisor at BKF, sent me to a field trip in search of inspiration. I spent a sunny morning at Damsgård's barnehage, a modern brand new nursery in Bergen. The main purpose of the visit was to look at how children move around and what sort of installations and design were produced for the outdoor. The visit was certainly interesting, not so much for the design itself, but mostly to see how children behave in a designed and confined environment. As you may see on the side pictures, it was a beautiful spring day, bright sun shine, clear sky and children..indoors. That came as a surprise, I even thought this is not a forest nursery. I reckoned children would spend more time running outdoor other than playing indoor. Apparently, there's a tight schedule that rules nurseries, indoors activities are still dominating, even during beautiful spring days.

Nevertheless, children appeared to be enjoying the fantastic indoor facility. It would probably be hard to establish if children are enjoying an indoor orientated facility more than an outdoor one. Apparently, the busy schedule filled with games, songs, food, sketches leaves little time to think about it. Perhaps scientists wouldn't agree, but it seems clear that time runs faster in a kindergarten !



Fig.11 ; 12: Damsgaard kindergarten in Bergen, design and features. Source : A.Vino.



Fig.13 ; 14: Damsgaard kindergarten in Bergen, playground. Source : A.Vino.



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2.3 An Italian approach

Some of my most cheerful memories are linked to the time I spent at the nursery. Even though these memories are over 25 years old, I have a vivid image of the place. Some years ago, I happened to pass by the old nursery; located on a steep hill in my neighbourhood. I passed to pick up the son of an acquaintance of mine. As soon as I passed through the gate images flooded my head. There was an outstanding difference though, everything was so small. The perspective I have now from my 1.84 meters must differ a lot from when I was 3 years old. At the time, I had to run to make through the length of the courtyard; now with a few steps I reach the fence edging the slope.

How many Landscape Architects are planning a kindergarten with the perspective of a 3 years old kid?

Not too long ago, I went through some papers that my mother collected from my sisters' and my childhood. The three of us were at the same kindergarten though in different years. I can imagine we produced a certain amount of drawings, collages, carnival masks and tons of plastilina's figurines. Due to lack of space in our small apartment, my Mother kept only a small part of this terrific children art. I happened to stumble on a notebook written by our tutors; they collected some stories and drawings made by the kids. In some of these pages the children (including myself) answered to a simple question :

"How would you like your kindergarten to look like"

Most of the answers were out of the ordinary and could have probably only found a place in modern Abu Dabi. However, I found some interesting and inspiring comments. For instance, we had no notion of safety, in our "planning" there was no fixed height nor width, the design was purely a tool to develop entertainment.

Slides shaped like dragons, oversized swings, swimming pool with bubbles, fish tanks, endless layers of mattresses and sand pits wide as a football pitch.

In reality, what we had was a concrete building made in the 70's with little eye on the design. The complex is still up and running, hosting many children divided among kindergarten (3 to 6 years old) and Primary school (6 to 10 years old). I happened to spend eight years in the look alike bunker construction. At the time, I had no concern about architecture, landscape architecture, accessibility nor good design. The red line (Fig. 15) defines the nursery, not much space for the outdoor and even less for the design. In fact, the outdoor area is just another plane of asphalt with random installations. As I recall, we had two sand pits and a sort of pitch (lines painted over the asphalt). To look at it now and compare it with any of the kindergartens I came across in Scandinavia, it would make me think that the place was quickly built out of necessity to cover the 80's baby boom. Probably it was, and nobody seemed to bother at the time, least of all us, the children. In fact, I remember we enjoyed every corner of the massive building. Clearly children have other priorities and perceive space in different ways. At that age the adults' perspective is nothing but a blur; the physics rules applied to a 20 sq. meter room won't certainly warp according to the age, but let's face the fact that a corridor has a complete different meaning to a child.

Linked to this matter, I shall introduce an Italian experiment : "Coriandoline" . This is an interesting project related to nurseries that I would like to present and discuss as example of interaction between the planners and the children. In September 2008, a new neighbourhood arose in the village of Correggio, in the region of Emilia Romagna.



Fig.15 ; 16: Santullo nursery in Genova.

Source : Google maps.



Fig.17 ; 18: Design features of Coriandolin's project.

Source : Coriandoline web site.



This place is rather unique, it is in fact the first (at least in Italy) neighbourhood designed in collaboration with the children. We can arise eyebrows but let's face the fact that children can have a lot of inspiring insight for a project dedicated to them. The project has been carried out with the 700 children enrolled at the primary schools in Correggio and Rio Saliceto. At first, they introduced the idea with a simple survey : "How would you design your neighbourhood?". Hundreds of inspiring comments and drawings flooded the committee. The neighbourhood shall have transparent houses in order to look outside; no traffic whatsoever; soft floors: colourful interiors and exteriors; vast spaces to play; magical (indeed) and above all playful. The project won the Guggenheim prize in 2001, nowadays it is a colourful neighbourhood, the garages are hidden underneath artificial hills, the vegetation is all over the place and in each house there are unique playing features. Slides are completing staircases and walls are covered with drawings made by children and artists. In the elevators there are morphing mirrors. Finally in 2007, all the project was complete, the complex includes 10 houses placed in a "U" shape.

Even though the project is not directly linked to nurseries, I believe the concept behind it is of great importance and worth to use as reference. It does not happen every day to see such commitment from planners and clients, involving the "end user": giving something special to the whole project.

Perhaps the overall design may have some flows and receive some critics if analysed in details by experts such as Architects, Landscape Architects and Designers. I doubt though that children will be uncertain about this project, the success of the place seem to be certain for the end users.

Too often Architects and Landscape Architects approach a design from a wrong perspective, involving the end user more would only benefit the profession and the standard of living.

To conclude this chapter, I regard the Italian approach to be successful on many basis of early education. Even though there's still a huge gap compared to other countries. For instance, the outdoor philosophy is not much developed in the country and in my opinion, it is of a great importance nowadays. Too often I notice how the children in my parents neighbourhood are not enjoying the outdoors. Apparently parents are too busy or sometimes do not see the importance of outdoor activities. I believe the ministry of education could play an important role in supporting the nurseries pushing towards a more outdoorsy philosophy. Finally, designers could use the children's perspective, hopefully there will be more "Coriandoline" inspired projects in the years to come.



Fig.19; 20; 21: Design features of Coriandolin's project.
Source : Coriandoline web site.



3.1 External perspective

It is always interesting to know and understand other people's opinions. For this paper I decided it could be interesting to collect some outside perspective. I therefore asked a few questions to some friends and fellow Landscape Architects; the questions range between their view as professionals and what they perceived as children. All interviewees are around my age, which means they joined the kindergarten in the early 80's, each of them comes from a different country in Europe and clearly they had different experiences during kindergarten. May this effect their view as professionals when coming across a related project?

- 1) *As a Landscape Architect did you ever design an outdoor area for a kindergarten? If not, what would be your first priority and concern?*
- 2) *Do you believe a good design can influence the education of children during the early age?*
- 3) *Do you consider that outdoor kindergartens use a better approach compare to a traditional nursery in terms of learning?*
- 4) *Children perceive space in a different way compared to adults; do you/would you consider this an important factor when designing an outdoor area for them?*
- 5) *Did your nursery have a friendly outdoor design or was it just a random display of recreational installations?*

Maythinie Eludut – MSc Landscape Architect, Ecole Nationale supérieure du Paysage de Versailles.

- 1) I never worked on a kindergarten but the first priority would be to work with imagination, make a place which stimulates the children visually and tactually.
- 2) Yes absolutely!! actually, i do hope designing our daily environment has an impact on ourselves and in this contest on children (otherwise why bother!).
- 3) I am not sure I know the difference among those two, anyhow being outdoor is extremely important for children.
- 4) Sure; different height, different understanding of space, colors, taste, ideas....
- 5) I went in two different ones. The first had just a few recreational items, and the other was in parisian park, recreational items plus specific design (it was a 19th century park, romantic).

Irene Raineri – MSc Landscape Architect University of Genoa, Faculty of Landscape Architecture

- 1) I worked on a playground once and I believe that the first rule is security and interaction between children and space.
- 2) For sure a good design influences children education. In general Landscape Architecture has an influence on the quality of life, even more when it comes to children.
- 3) Certainly, the interaction between children and natural elements gives something more than traditional pre-made installation. It's constantly changing and more challenging.
- 4) Yes, we need to plan with their point of view entering their world, sure it's a fun thing to do!
- 5) Unfortunately my kindergarten was lacking in outdoor space.

Martina Oeser,
Dipl. Landschaftsarchitektin
TU BSLA, Berlin.

1) Yes. It was the outdoor area for a specialist facility on language disabled children. Next to a very near-natural related design the task was to include activity areas for different ages and active levels to demand the sensorial skills like feeling, seeing, hearing, sensing scents. The concept included only indigenous plants, which were not poisonous. The design worked a lot on shaping the soil to have totally different viewpoints and areas. I'd name "exploring and experiencing the surrounding" as a first priority.

2) Yes, it definitely influences the education as well as the quality it is made from. A child that is asked to use its mental abilities to discover its surrounding is more asked for its intelligence than one that only gets simple tasks. I would identify "simple" in the meaning of very banal/plain designs.

3) I'm not sure what you'd consider a traditional nursery. There are probably cultural differences. It depends on the pedagogic background, if it is for learning abilities to be outdoors or for other reasons. As well, it depends on the background, if it's in an urban or suburban/rural surrounding. In general, I support a child-oriented surrounding and in our days where children get less exercise, I'd send my child to a place where it would be able to discover the outside world.

4) I consider perception the most important designing factor dealing with space to be made for children. There are completely different needs and ways of seeing the world. A child's mind needs to be challenged in a learning process for its further development. A designer can encourage that. The goal should be learning by experiencing things on its own.

5) My nursery was in former GDR and I went to it from age 6 months to 6 years. In that political system in

the early 80s everything was standardized: starting from the building construction to the setting of playground elements. There was nothing special to discover to go to a different kindergarten anywhere in the country; it would have had the same simple elements. My nursery varied only a bit because the new built apartment area around it was situated on a former cemetery site, which had very dominant huge trees, which made me feel much protected underneath. Part of this old cemetery was turned into a park and I remember it as the biggest adventure area. I was free discovering things on my own in a still somehow protected surrounding.

Lucy Caudery, Dipl.
Landskabsarkitekt KVL ,
Copenhagen.

1) I have designed playgrounds for school children. First priority for any children of all ages, is not to over-design, but to give possibilities for the children imagination to create their own games. Vary the possibilities for different types of social activity, places for bikes, tricycles, small hiding places, quiet zones, zones with no bikes, open space for running around etc. Nature makes the best toys. Water, sand, earth, flowers. Flexibility - elements that can be moved around and used in different ways.

2) Yes, especially social skills, and making numbers, and letters and knowledge of nature a natural part of playing, so it doesn't seem too intimidating later.

3) Yes, in many ways. Fresh air is healthier and more exercise helps later on

4) Yes. Even the smallest things, boundaries, corners can be part of an imaginative world, a game. These things are not perceived the same way by adults. This means that very simple designs work just as well as complicated playgrounds. Colours are also important.

5) I put great weight on designing the approach to the institution. It influences the mood of both children, teachers and parents.

Liva Dudareva, MA. Landscape Architect, Edinburgh College of Art.

1) I haven't design a kindergarten outdoor area, however I was involved in design development for art and music school public space in Latvia. First priority for me would be to talk with children and think about diversity and flexibility of spaces.

2) Of course! i think it is essential, a well designed outdoor space can enhance creativity and diversity of learning for young children.

3) I think there should be a balance between the two.

4) I think it is an important factor. I have some experience interviewing children about how they perceive the place, and it is very interesting and broadens the way you see the outdoor space for children, however I would not rely only on that.

5) I did not go to nursery, but instead was staying at home. As I lived in the outskirts of town, we usually created outdoor play spaces ourselves.

Despite the different background I share most of above views. We all believe that a good design can enhance children's experience. I believe some of the interviewers would put more effort into the beauty of the design rather than leaving space to further development. It seems they all agree on the fact that the first priority is to focus on the various sensations a design can transmit. Children need to develop their senses and perception, it seems a valid idea to stress the design in that direction. Also children need space to run and play around, Landscape Architects need to use the square meters at the

best. Personally I do not appreciate a project filled with installations and no space left for imaginations. Lucy Caudery states "I put great weight on designing the approach to the institution. It influences the mood of both children, teachers and parents.". I consider this to be the closest answer to my ideology.

3.2 Ideas leading to some proposals

This chapter will collect a series of ideas coming from different sources such as references from related projects and images that captured my interests. As I move around, I keep an eye open for hints and references. Whenever I go somewhere, I try to pick on the details of a project or a shape that could be developed into something new: a single feature with great potential for some of my projects. Some of these features could find a spot in Nygård's proposal. A project that caught my attention is the Fuji Kindergarten in Japan. The oval shape building is designed to host 500 children, an impressive building which is in fact thought as a single village rather than a traditional nursery. The architects joined forces with Kashiwa Sato, a famous art director, together they produced this fairy tail kindergarten in suburban Tokyo. Surely, the main feature of this architecture is the roof deck; a giant roof garden with a perimeter of 180 meters.^{#9} Most municipalities could use hundreds of arguments to discard the roof idea, I believe this committee took a brave decision, this feature is unique and I believe it can enhance children's experience on many different levels.

*Fig. 22: Fuji Kindergarten with roof top.
Source : Tezuka Architects.*



There are some other features that caught my attention, for instance I knew from the start that the hill could be a key feature in the development of the kindergarten. I started looking how other nurseries developed some “natural” installations. The hill needs some cleaning other than some real design. The best way to do so is to use material in situ, reorganizing the area without disrupting the natural and wild look.^{#10} There are many solutions I have seen, for instance chopping down some dead or sick trees and add some other chumps could be a great way to create a path that leads children in the area. As BKF is going to be in charge of the building process, I had the chance to talk to the employees at the Building department. I showed them some images and sketches of such installations, they were very keen to apply and build some of these ideas for the new kindergarten. As in any other multidisciplinary projects, there are obvious priorities, Landscape Architecture is too often to be on the low end. For instance BKF forecast to spend 2 / 3 of the budget for the buildings, the remaining third shall be divided into parking lot, road adjustments and outdoor playground. It's therefore important to look at economic solutions for the outdoor arrangement. Children like to hide, installations like the one above, with tree branches, or the tunnel made of Salix tree are easy and entertaining solutions. Safety is an important matter when it comes to children, nowadays there are a range of flooring materials that are both secure, playful and at a reasonable price. It is possible to create colourful patterns like the one shown below; the recycled rubber material is very durable and fits perfectly in a children's playground. Another feature that attracts me is the possibility to create different height and shapes with soil reuse. In Nygård there will be a certain movement of material, it could be easily moved in order to create some artificial hills, incorporating a concrete tunnel and vegetation on top.



Fig. 23 Top : Logs used to create a path. / 24 Left : Tree branches to create a shelter. / 25 Right : Spiral tree climbing installation. / 26 Left B. : Sand pit. / 27 Right B. : Salix tunnel.



Fig. 28 Left : Rubber playground. / 29 Right : Salix shelter. / 30 Bottom : Artificial hill and tunnel.

Source : Playscapes.



3.3 Initial thoughts, gained knowledge

During my academic path, I worked on various projects, the discipline of Landscape Architecture is vast and can be complicated to enclose and define it within few words. Most people tend to pick a feature of the discipline and elaborate it. Some of my Landscaping friends are very found of rural areas and wish to work on natural reserves. A friend in Germany concentrates all his design efforts on courtyards playing with simple elements; others are into temporary installations on the edge with art to send a message to the community. An old classmate does not go beyond the concept of a project, leaving the development to others. That is the beauty behind this discipline and the diversity involved.

However, when it comes to nowadays market, a Landscape Architect can hardly make a living out of a single feature, being specialised can be risky for the business. Widening your view and experience on different projects during the academic years is a necessity for the future profession. During my years in schools I never came across a kindergarten project; before starting at BKF I spent little thoughts on how children can relate to a designed environment and if Architects and Landscape Architects are “lowering” their view when planning a children facility.

I couldn't help but notice that most of the modern facilities for children look good, fantastic design, shiny material and colourful walls, fancy and futuristic installations. I believe this is a good thing as a good design increase the beauty of the landscape, but that is not the purpose of designing a place for children. An Architect/Landscape architect has to sell an idea, a design, naturally it will put all the efforts to create a good design that attracts attention. This design will certainly be appreciated by the client and observers, but how is the “target” reacting?

In one of the previous chapters, I described my personal experience in the kindergarten. I wrote how poor in outdoor area that place was, lack of installation and design. To look at the building nowadays it makes me feel like tearing it down and designing it from scratch. But I shouldn't forget I wrote this in 2010, being 29 years old with a record of study related to Architecture. I did not take into account the view I had when I was four years old. How did I feel about the massive concrete walls and the plane of asphalt 25 years ago? I had no concern for not having a clean and fresh meadow, no worries for not having a slide or a swing.

As a matter of fact, all of us loved that place, a design nightmare but an incredible dream for us. While writing, searching, asking questions and sketching I realise that the design itself is not the key factor. I believe it is important but, there are other priorities in a project. I do not mean to minimize the work of Architects and Landscapers at all, I came to believe that a good design helps, but it is not the dominant factor when it comes to children. I honestly believe the key is the possibility to leave a future development to the place, where children and parents can interact creating something together. In fact, the role of the parents throughout the learning process is underrated, if we think about it the child goes through different educations at the same time. At home with the parents interacts with an environment, mostly indoors (especially nowadays) and at the nursery, where parents are poorly involved the child has other set of rules and schemes. It could be interesting for the designer to leave a certain degree of freedom for the outdoors, where children, tutors and parents can interact and shape the kindergarten together. I consider this the most important factor; I believe, we may have more environmental responsible and friendly adults by using this approach in the early age.

4.1 Developing the ideologies

Each designer has got his own approach; some start with a model, others use computer graphics to build something in 3D, collages and even painting. Inspiring ideas can come out of the blue, it happened more than once to me, just by sitting on the train I got hit by an idea which further on developed into a design. For Landscape Architects, looking at the surrounding is mandatory: how people behave in open spaces, trends, preferences and simple solutions can be found anywhere, but it is important to extract the essence and adapt them in a precise context. My personal approach is to sketch, I see an interesting feature and try to reproduce it adapting it to a certain situation. I noticed how during the years I unconsciously built up a library of items. Each time I begin a new project I get plenty of ideas in the concept phase. Nygård has been no exception. I put all the emphasis I kept during the years out of University, I collect a sketchbook in Bergen appositely for the projects at BKF, in a few months I produced a fairly good amount of sketches and ideas. It has been my first experience in real practice, up to nowadays I designed for my self, with the targets I set. I realize that the challenge behind the profession is to adapt your ideas for the end user and customer. You may produce a great design, but at the eyes of the customer could be unnecessary. When I started I had some ideas that kept changing meeting after meeting. The facts that brought me to design the place, as

shown in the next chapters, are a balance among client expectations and my personal view as Landscape Architect. If the outcome does not meet client's expectations, we may say that the designer failed the project. But what if the outcome does not please the designer himself? Landscape Architects design because they believe they can produce something that creates a better environment for others. It is a remunerate profession that gives a service like many others. I believe that each Landscape Architect works as well for the pleasure to produce something useful. It happens during the academic years to design something in a rush, between an exam and the other, it happened to everyone I know. But is this changing when engaging in real practise? We need to build a portfolio we are proud of, present a design that will bring customers. The following chapter will display the design I produced for BKF, finally the facts will be put on the balance again.

*Fig. 31 : Balance between client expectations and personal perspectives.
Source : A.Vino.*



4.2 Proposal for BKF

The following plan illustrates the existing situation on site. The dotted lined inscribes the outdoor area to plan. As previously explained, the former **Priest house** is to be renewed while the **Barn** building shall be demolished. Most importantly, the plan is a clear reference concerning access roads and surrounding buildings. Most of the constructions are residential and independent houses.

The **Hill** is dominating the West side of the site with mix groves of vegetation and ascending height. South/West of the hill, the existing nursery is located with direct access to Alfred Offerdals road, which is also the access road to Nygård's **Church**. These two buildings are also linked through a pedestrian road and share a small parking lot. The graveyard is dominating the East side of the site, running along **Kringsjåveien**; including a chapel and a tool shelter.

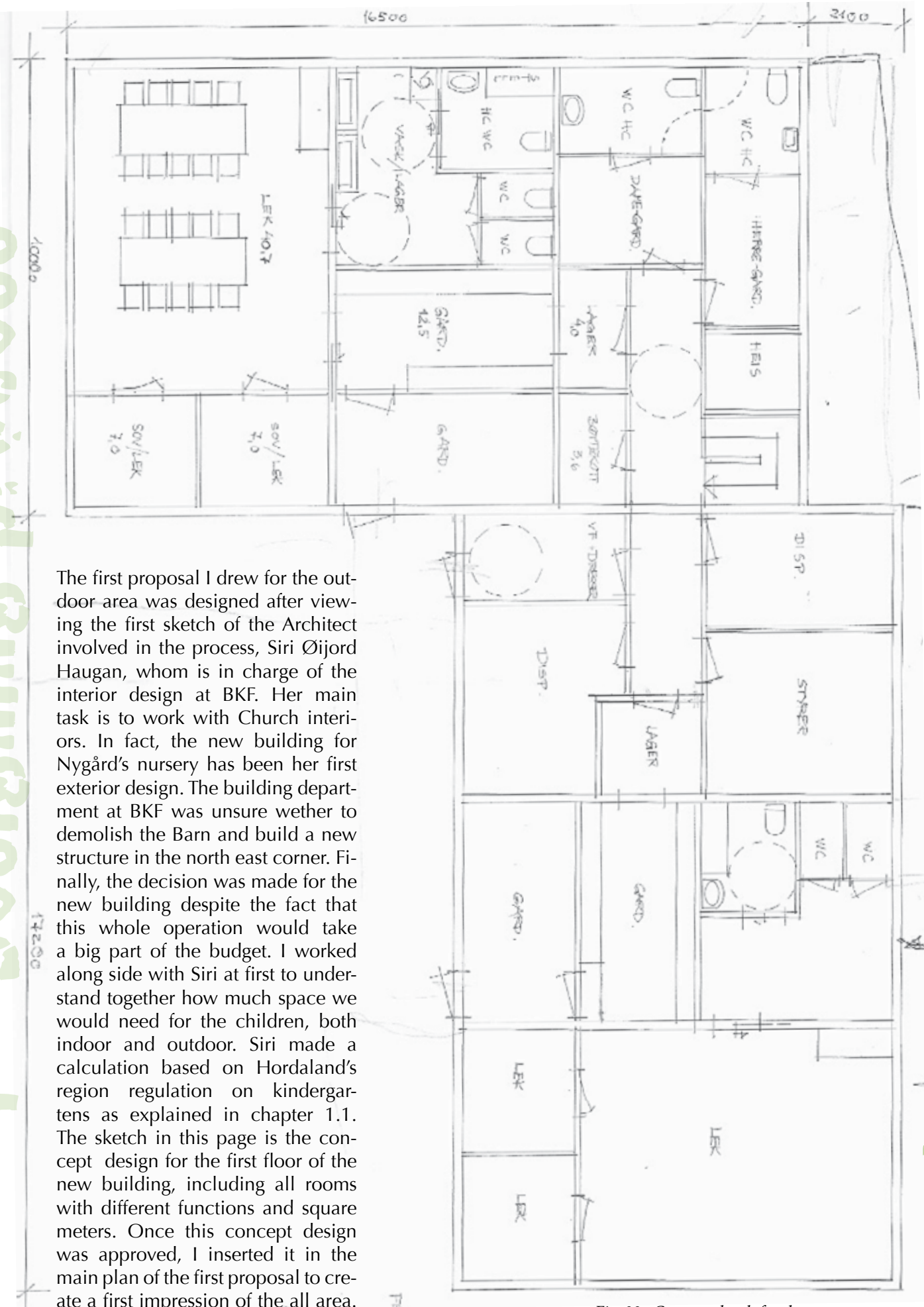


4 • Designing process

Fig. 32 : Existing situation plan.
Source : A. Vino



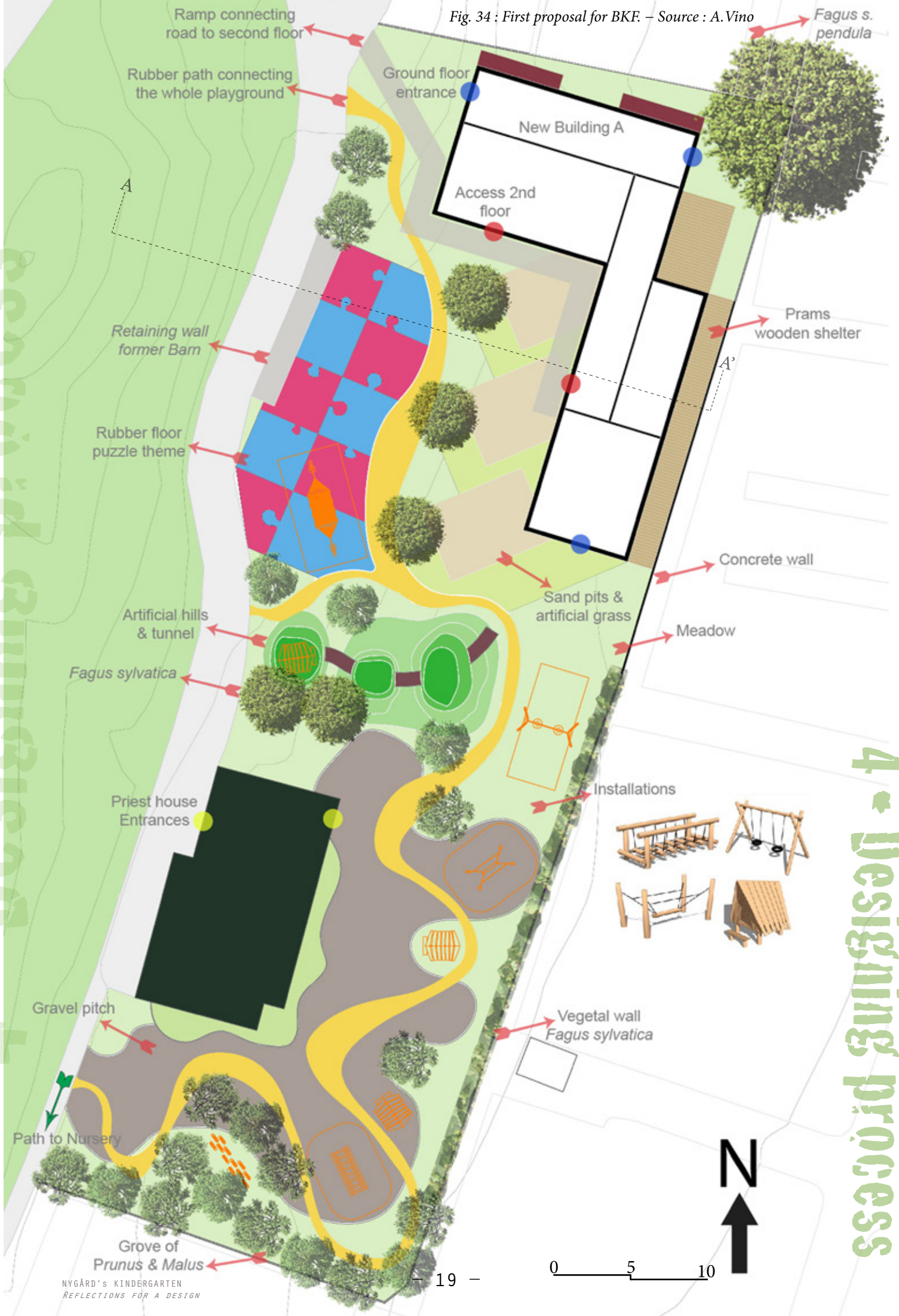
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The first proposal I drew for the outdoor area was designed after viewing the first sketch of the Architect involved in the process, Siri Øijord Haugan, whom is in charge of the interior design at BKF. Her main task is to work with Church interiors. In fact, the new building for Nygård's nursery has been her first exterior design. The building department at BKF was unsure whether to demolish the Barn and build a new structure in the north east corner. Finally, the decision was made for the new building despite the fact that this whole operation would take a big part of the budget. I worked along side with Siri at first to understand together how much space we would need for the children, both indoor and outdoor. Siri made a calculation based on Hordaland's region regulation on kindergartens as explained in chapter 1.1. The sketch in this page is the concept design for the first floor of the new building, including all rooms with different functions and square meters. Once this concept design was approved, I inserted it in the main plan of the first proposal to create a first impression of the all area.

Fig. 33 : Concept sketch for the new building with room measures.
Source : S.Øijord

Fig. 34 : First proposal for BKE. – Source : A.Vino



4 • Designing process

The first attempt illustrated in the previous page presents an overall solution for the space between the new building and the former Priest house.

The undulate yellow rubber path links all the features of the area and it is intended to be used by children only. The North part of the area includes two entrances, the yellow rubber path descending to the playground and a metal ramp, which covers the gap between the road and the second floor of the new building. In fact, the 2nd floor is designed to match the height of the road at 45 m.s.l, the small structure ease the access for prams and people while working as balcony.

The former barn is removed, however the retaining wall is kept as it's holding back the soil and the above road. The ground floor is also kept and reused as playground. The idea is to cover the concrete surface with a rubber flooring, creating a colourful puzzle theme. Following down the main yellow path we cross a series of artificial hills, a concrete tunnel is buried underneath; children can go through the tunnel or over the hills covered with grass.

In Norway, it is not unusual to have a nursery next to a cemetery, however it is necessary to close the existing access to the graveyard. I therefore designed a shelter for prams on the east side of the new building. This shelter will function as dividing wall and dormitory for the youngest children. As visible on the side cross section and sketch, this shelter is slightly below ground level, it does not present any insulation and has a small opening between wall and roof to allow a better air circulation.

Further south, as visible on the main plan, the wall is leaving space to a vegetal edge made of *Fagus sylvatica*; this will prevent children to cross over the playground and will also keep visitors from entering the kindergarten.

The south part of the plan shows the continuity of the main path. Rushing through the hills there's a vast area with gravel where children can enjoy to dig holes or playing ball.

On the south part of the area, the old vegetation is removed, the main idea is to plant *Prunus* and *Malus* trees. The yellow path ends on the south side of the former Priest house, this is a turning point that leads to the existing Nursery when following the brand new path heading southwards.

The design itself is rather simple yet efficient. The key features are the puzzle playground made with little cost since it reuses the ground floor of the former Barn. The sinuous rubber path can be an original, safe and entertaining solution where children can use tricycles to go all around the area. A remark made by Helen Stanghelle, head of the kindergarten tutors, concerned the sand pits. According to her experience, it is not a good idea to design such feature close to the building, sand can easily fly inside the building and become a nuisance for the cleaning service.

Another remark concerned the building. Siri had to adjust the dimension to arrange the rooms in a better way. This lead to a series of changes in the overall design. Frode also suggested to makes a few changes in the design, possibly enlarging the puzzle playground including more installations, to review the position of hills and sand pits, an finally to give more space to a meadow rather than gravel. Due to the modification that the building went through I had to find a better solution for the access ramp as well. These remarks lead me to rethink the whole area and formulate another proposal.

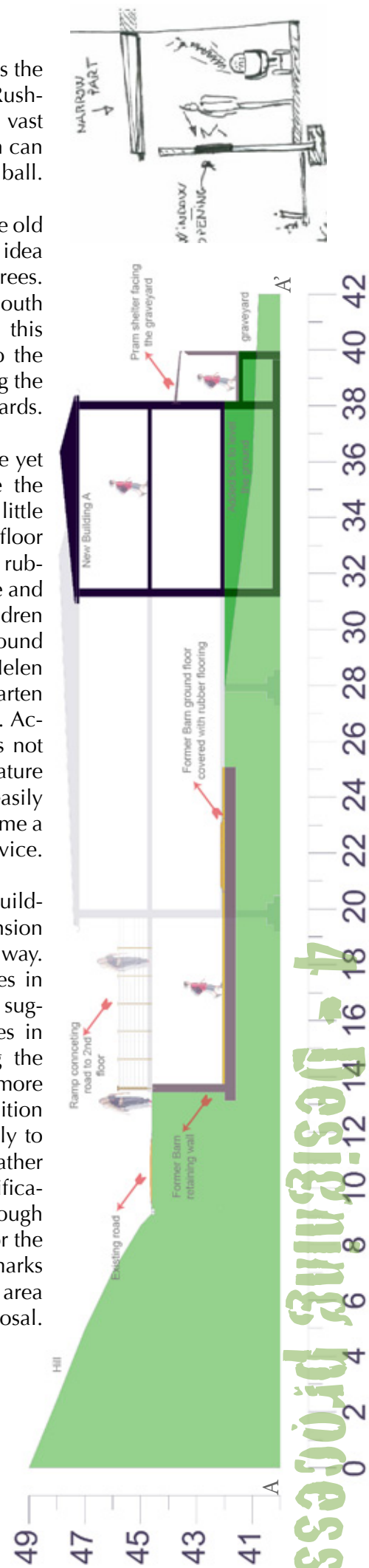
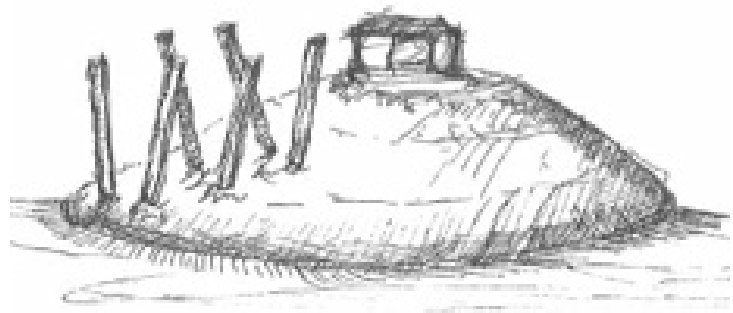
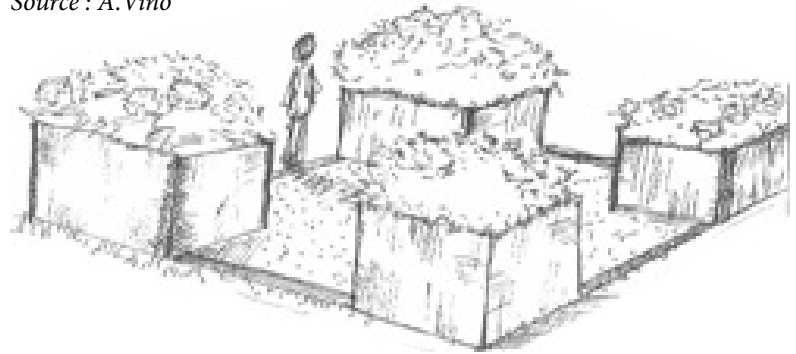


Fig. 35 : Detail sketch of Pram's shelter.
36 : Cross section of first proposal.
Source : A. VINO

I began to sketch some other features that could replace or be added to the existing ones. It occurred to me that dividing the space could be better as children of different age groups are located in different buildings. There's no need using a real fence; I remembered about the Salix tunnel images and applied it to the design. The kindergarten's committee made me notice that's also necessary to have a place where to store the toys for kids, such as tricycles, footballs and buckets. The sand pits gave me some trouble, they are of "vital" importance in a kindergarten, but the space was getting harder to arrange when so many features were on request. I thought to join the sandpit with some flowerpots (Fig. 38). On the top right we have a detail of the hill with climbing poles and a small prefab hut. Below a small jumping game to install on the rubber puzzle playground.



Above Fig. 37 : Sketch of artificial hill.
 Below 38 : Sketch of flowerbed and sandpit.
 Source : A.Vino



Below 39 : Sketch of installation for rubber playground.
 Source : A.Vino

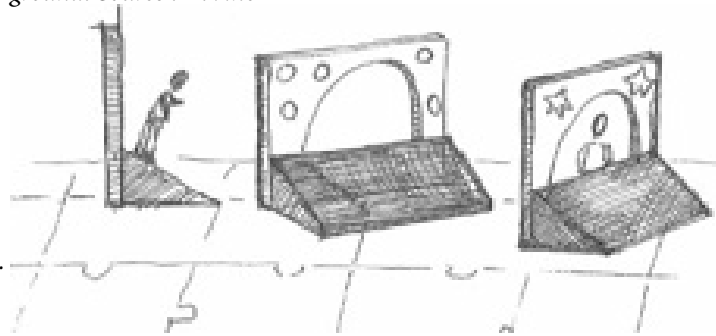
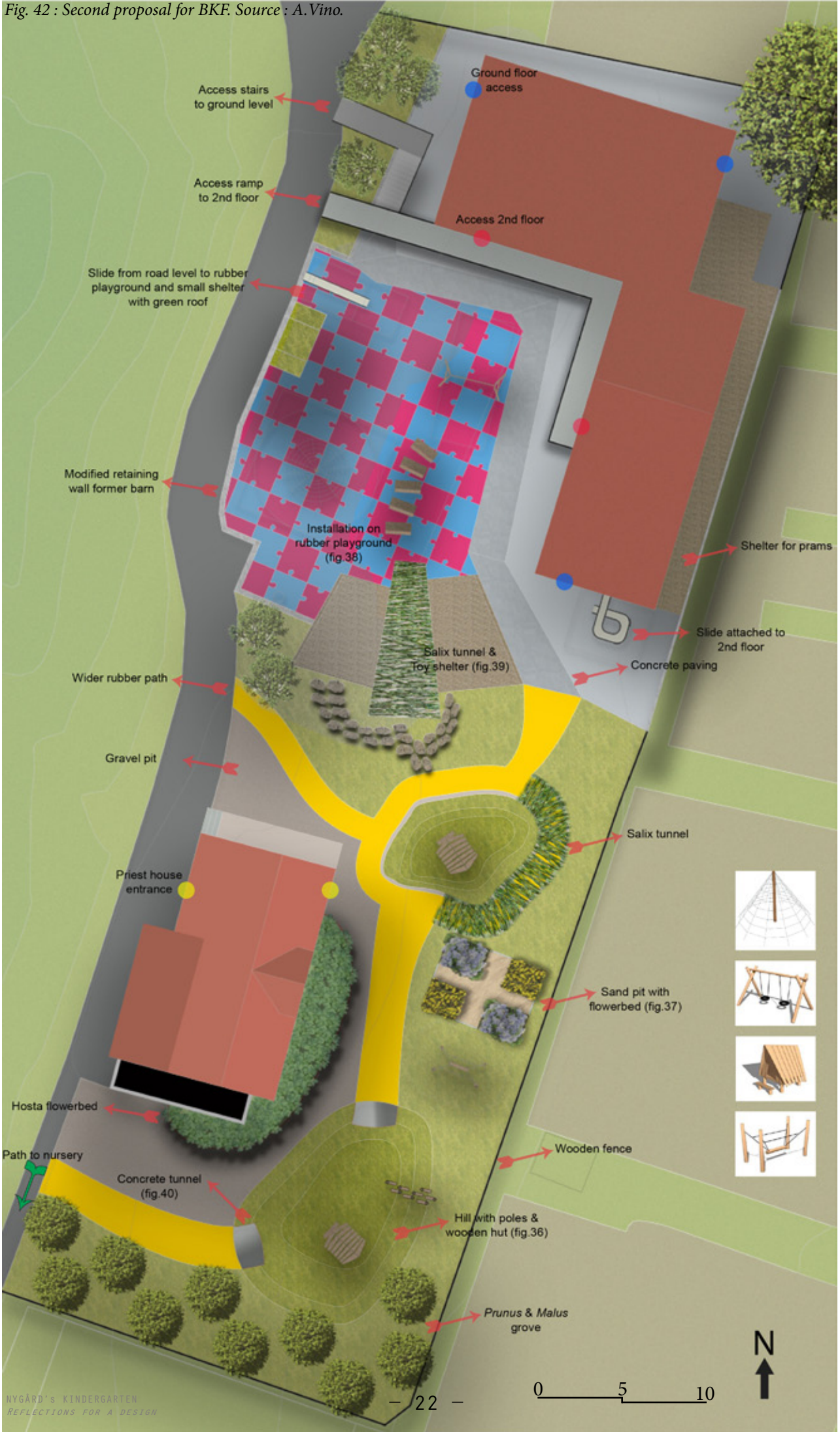


Fig. 40 : Sketch of Salix tunnel between toy shelters.
 Fig 41 : Sketch of hill with tunnel.
 All featured sketches in this page are included in main plan for second proposal on next page.
 Source : A.Vino



Fig. 42 : Second proposal for BKF. Source : A.Vino.



4 - Designing process

4 - Designing process

In the previous page we have an extensive plan of the new proposal. There are plenty of differences from the first proposal: slight modifications of the building in matter of size had a strong impact on the outdoor design. The access to the new building had to be reviewed, this new design includes a staircase next to the modified ramp. This will allow to access the second and ground floor from the same position, without having to cross part of the playground.

The puzzle playground has an increased surface and more installations. This space is divided by the two toy shelters and the Salix tunnel. The sand pits were removed as it could have caused some issues with the sand flying around. Also the yellow rubber path has been modified in size and shape, it lost the sinuosity but grew in width to ease the "traffic" of tricycles.

In front of the former Priest house there's a Hosta plantation surrounded by gravel. The grass surface has been increased removing most of the previous gravel pit. This may result in a more complex and expensive maintenance in long terms, but it was a strong point from the kindergarten tutors. Apparently gravel is not much appreciated in nurseries. It's partially due to the fact that small children may swallow the tiny stones and that's less fascinating to run on gravel than grass.

On the east side, along the building wall, a new shelter was designed to host around 20 prams. The shelter is not insulated, tutors noticed that children tend to get less sick when sleeping in a place that is not heated continuously. In this way, they are protected by all weather conditions but still have a change of fresh air. Parents agree that's a better solutions and want their children to sleep outside even during winter time; once again :

"There is no bad weather, only bad clothing,"

The building department agrees that the second proposal has a more realistic approach to the initial client's requests. The overall design is more complete yet simpler than the previous one. There has not been an estimate while I was designing this at BKF, however there was no concern about the budget; the cost for the outdoor area seems to be within reasonable limits. Below you may view some pictures I took around the site to give a better idea of the area.



Fig. 43 Top L : Barn with existing path to the graveyard. / 44 Top R : View from the existing nursery towards the Priest house, the new path shall link the area. / 45 Mid Up : Barn and existing access road. / 46 Mid Below : View of the existing garden from the South East corner / 47 Bottom L. : Continued view from the South East corner. / 48 Below L. : Fagus sylvatica pendula in the North East corner at the edge between future Kindergarten and existing graveyard. Source : A.Vino.



4.3 Alternative ideas

Working for the first time with real budgets and client expectations is interesting. There's a lot to learn during company meetings. Every person attending has a different task and priority; there's a certain feeling of joining a political summit of some sort. The business man knowing the numbers that holds everything up; the Builder considering whether your design is more than questionable or could actually be done with a common effort; the Architect wondering why a Landscape Architect would step into his territory; the Leader of the kindergarten department doubtfully looking at the sandpit being too close to the main entrance.

This small metaphor is based on the feeling I had during the first meeting at BKF. As explained in the previous chapters, BKF is going to demolish the existing barn in order to erect a new building in the north-east corner. This decision arrived after a persistent policy conducted by Mr. Frode Røynesdal, the original plan was in fact to keep the barn, renew it and use it as nursery. In order to persuade the remaining members, I've been asked to produce a proposal for the new building. As I find it fascinating to work with structures, it took me little time to produce a few proposals.

This proposal regards mostly the structure. As we can see in Fig. 49 the old barn has been removed, leaving space for the playground. The new building is composed of two structures placed one on top of another. The structures are tilted and adjusted in such way to follow the terrain and use the available space as much as possible.

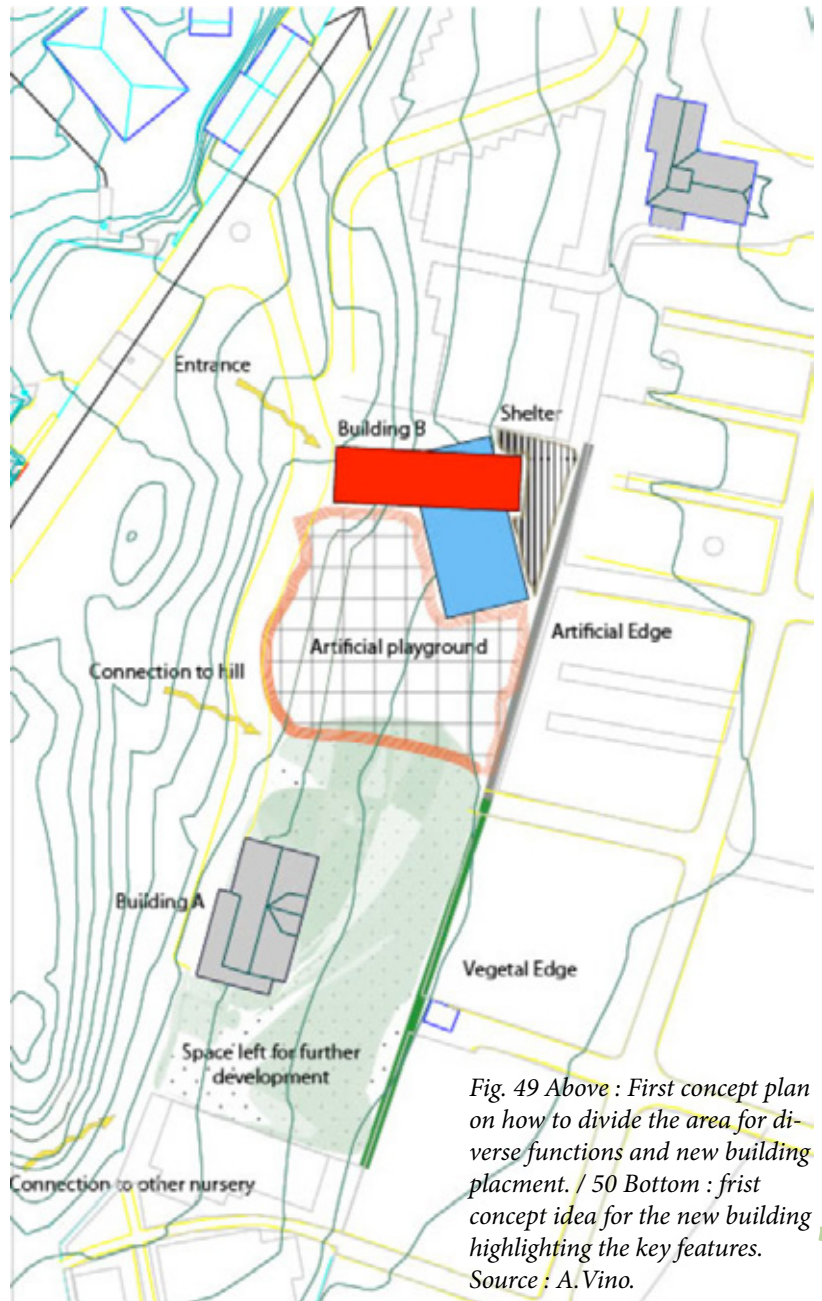
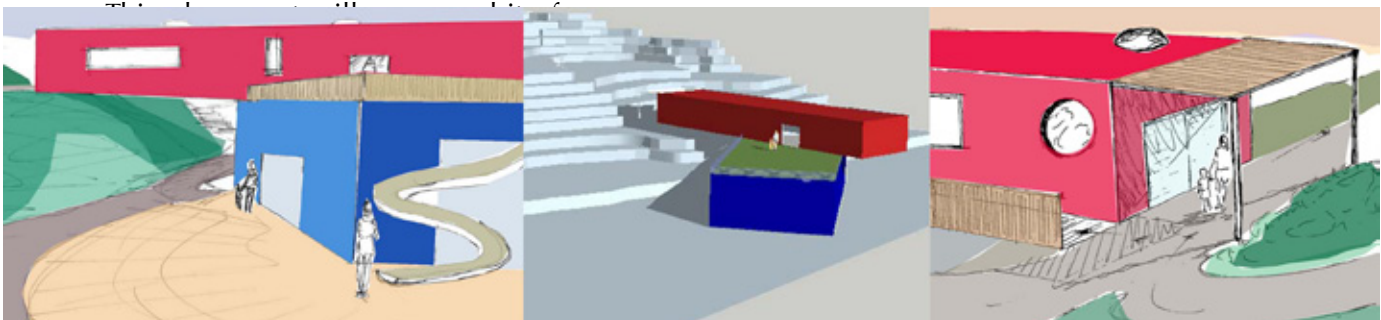


Fig. 49 Above : First concept plan on how to divide the area for diverse functions and new building placement. / 50 Bottom : first concept idea for the new building highlighting the key features. Source : A. VINO.

The top building lays on the entrance road level, this will create a covered passage on playground level, as shown in below images. The idea is to include a slide on the "Blue" building which has a green roof that can be used as playground. The overall idea pleased the committee, however they were reluctant about removing the barn completely at first.



I was encouraged to elaborate another idea; some people were keen on giving the whole project a modern and attracting look, but at the same time, keep the structure of the old barn to save some costs. The image below displays a structure partially attached to the old barn and partially sustained by wooden pillars with odd angles. The concept is to give a fresh look yet create a contrast with the old barn resulting in one single structure. I had in mind to create this “floating” structure as an indoor playground for children; a long and narrow stretch with odd shaped windows on the ceiling, floor and walls.

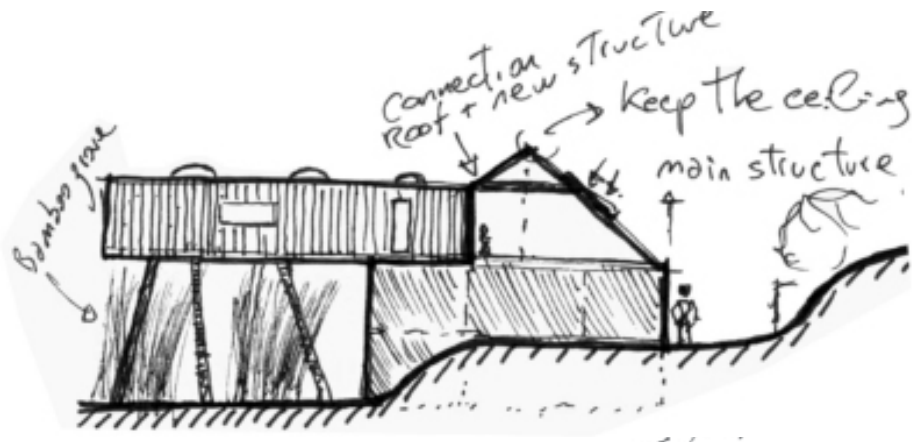


Fig. 51 Above : Concept cross section of the interaction between Barn and new building. / Fig. 52 Right : Possible roof connection. / Fig. 53 Below L. : Cross section of the “floating” structure. / Fig. 54 Below R. : Top view of the Barn roof with new building attached to it. Source : A.Vino

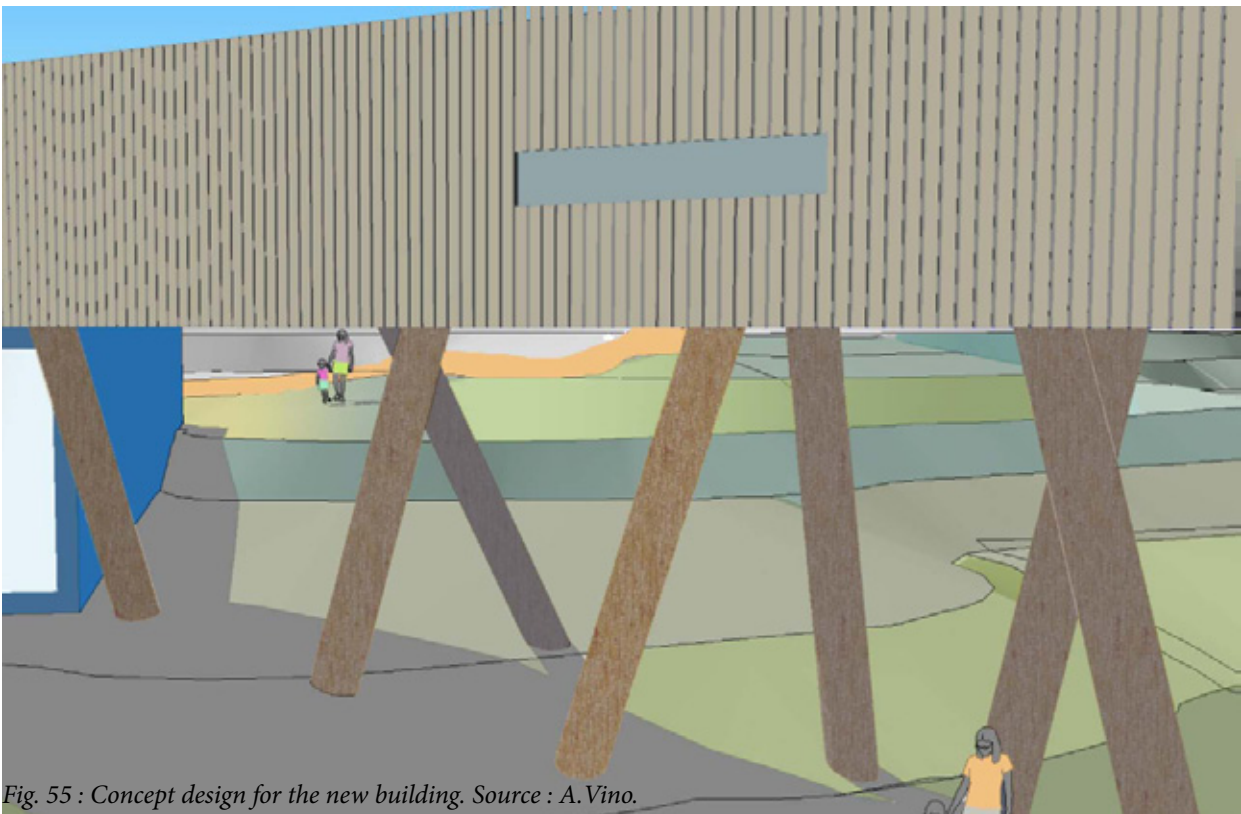
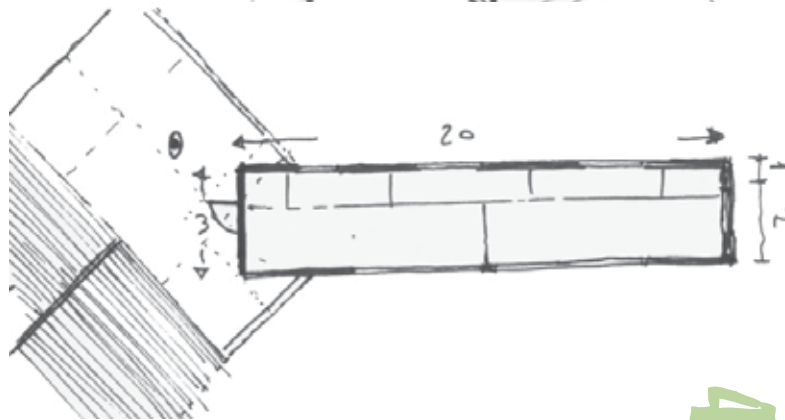
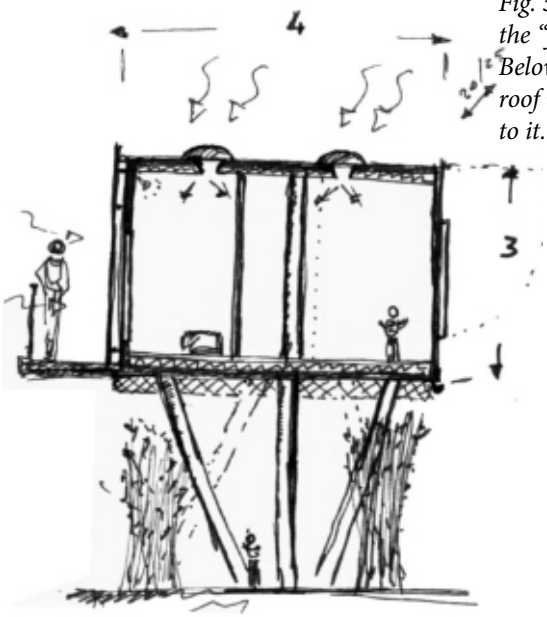


Fig. 55 : Concept design for the new building. Source : A.Vino.

Another aspect of this second alternative is the arrangement of the playground. As discussed in the previous chapters, I believe that it's important to create a synergy among parents, tutors, children and nursery. In order to do so, it's best to deliver an "unfinished" place. The green area (Fig. 48) is set to "further development". BKF is willing to lend some manpower and material in order to help parents and children to build their own place. This "Dugnad" practice is rather common in Norway. Most people involved in the planning of Nygård's kindergarten are expecting to see a finished project, where each square meter designed is hosting a specific function. However, there are some others who believe that an "unfinished" design can deliver a better experience. With what I read and wrote so far, I believe the place needs to have space left over to create a bond among the families and the nursery. Above sketches are just some simple solutions that could be done by parents with a little BKF "Dugnad". Materials can range from boulders taken off the ground during construction, tree trunks chopped to clear the area, sand can be easily bought and placed, few nails, cement and cooperation could easily shape part of the new Kindergarten. I believe children could benefit from this experience, knowing that the installation they are enjoying is part of a common effort.

Some of the following sketches could also be applied to the Hill side. During the time I spent at BKF I did not formulate many thoughts for the Hill, as they do not intend to intervene for the time being. However, I believe it is important to include some installations. For instance climbing poles or a small fire place, in order to attract children. As the new kindergarten will be linked to the old one, the Hill will become an important exchange point and hopefully this small portion of "wilderness" will be enjoyed as much as the other playgrounds.

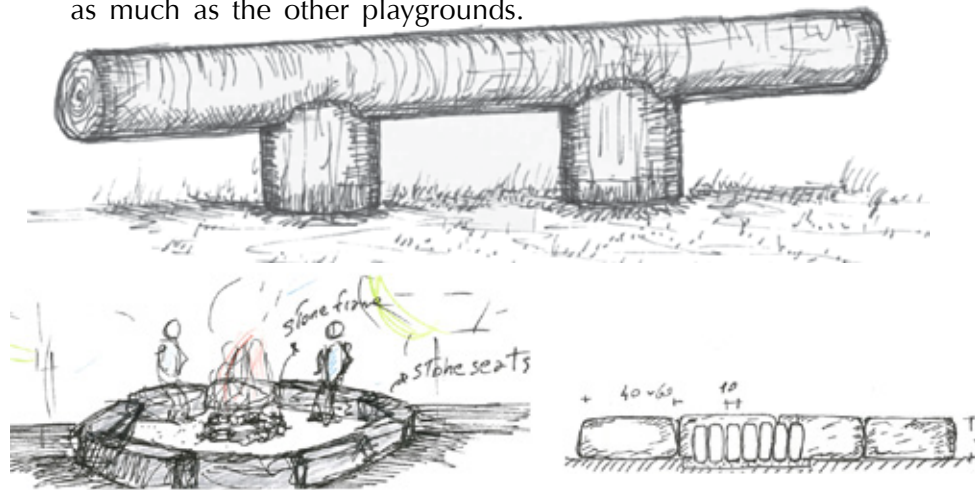
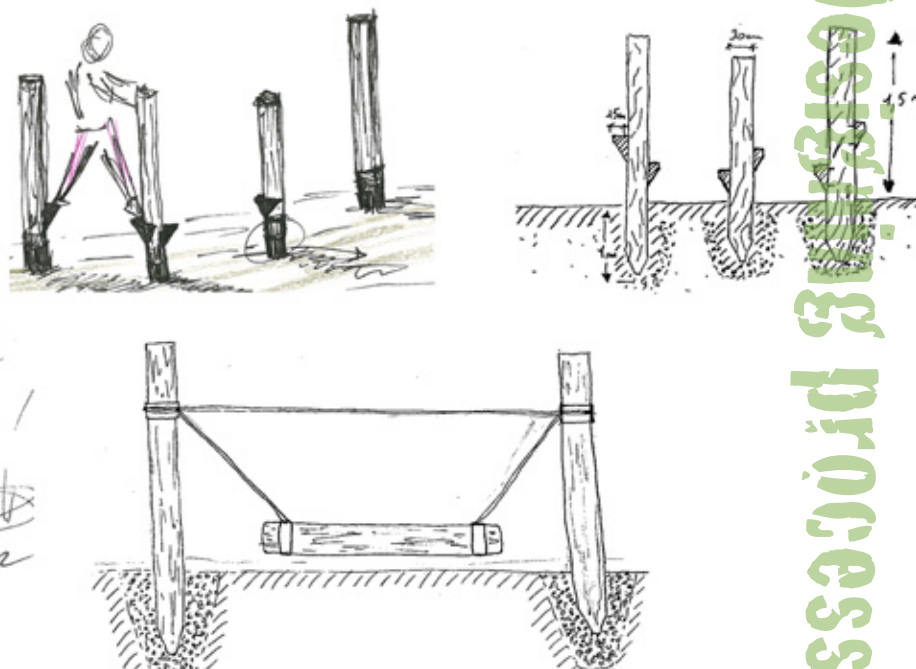
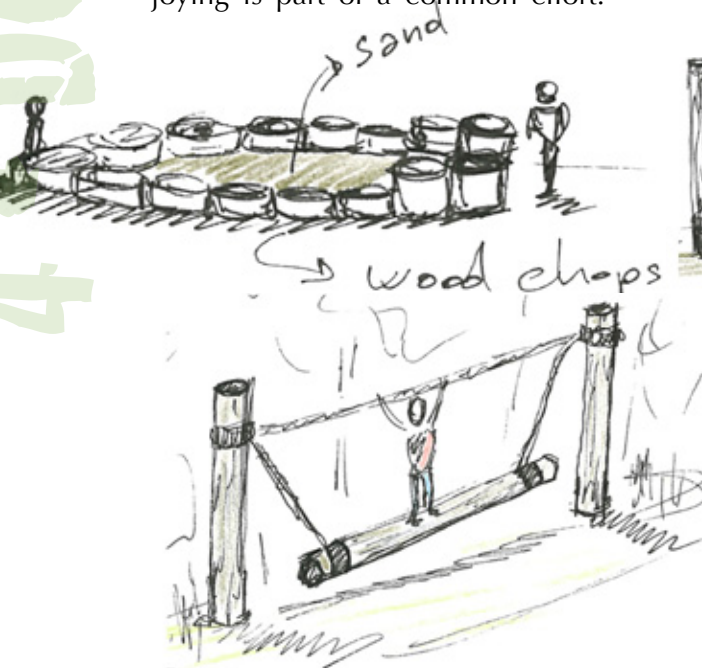


Fig. 56 First Above : Wooden balancing trunk. / Fig. 57 Second Above : Stone fire place. / Fig. 58 Below L. : Sandpit with logs. / Fig. 59 Below R. : Wooden poles into the ground. / Fig. 60 Bottom : Wooden pole swing.
Source : A. Vino



5.1 Overall view and critics

To conclude this paper, I would like to make a few critics on the process that brought me to this stage. At the beginning of the project I had not yet decided how to handle a new thesis, what topic to choose, what to give importance when writing the dissertation without repeating old mistakes. I realised that the academic path is not done to teach how to become a Landscape Architect; that is learnt once stepping into professionalism. The University can teach us how to wear the “special glasses”; those glasses show you the surrounding in a different way, the landscape finally gets a meaning and you start to see the importance of Landscape design. A person not familiar with Landscape Architecture would rarely understand the reason behind the choice of a certain stone used in a new square, why that odd bench has been installed on the water front, why the new urban park has tiny led lighting the bike road, and especially why would anyone spend years sketching outdoors under rain, snow, sun and wind. Despite my troubled academic path, I believe I am wearing these glasses. The fact that I am not working as a professional does not matter, perhaps I never will, but I believe I’ll keep a keen eye on details and that’s definitely a plus in life experience.

Finally I chose to work on kindergartens because I believe it is a sensible matter that deserves more involvement. I could have written this dissertation in many ways, including more pictures, adding more references from other related projects, interviewing others than only Landscape Architects. But just as the design for BKF is one of the many possibilities I came up with in the few months I spent on the project, this dissertation is one of the possible outcomes of my involvement in the process. If I were to start again tomorrow I would not continue from where I left but start from scratch instead. There are infinite ways to design an outdoor space

and that’s what makes this discipline so fascinating and everlasting.

The end customer, BKF, has been satisfied with my work. However the process to build a kindergarten is long, many things may change and perhaps only few features will survive from the design I proposed. Personally, I would like to present another solution to BKF, I believe that they did not put enough thoughts in creating an outdoor philosophy and how to involve the families. I talked in various chapters about creating a bond between children, families, tutors and the nursery. The education in the early age is very important. Sure it’s a lot of running around on tricycles, climbing trees and digging holes; but at this age an individual starts to shape a personality and attitude towards life and environment. Being surrounded by a combination of good design and plenty of outdoor activity will surely have benefits later on the society.

Concerning the specifics of the design, I have to admit that there is not great depth in details, the first phase is the conceptual one, that’s where I began and ended. Most of my projects are at a conceptual level, this is another peculiarity of this discipline. During the academic path each student tends to develop a style according to their personality and interests. If I were to choose the perfect job at this stage, I would keep on working on ideas: concept design is what I presented in this paper and hopefully, the path I shall follow in the profession.

I hope you enjoyed reading this paper; I thank you for the attention.

Best wishes,

Alessandro VINO.

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