



Recovering Common Ground

Landscape Architecture as a tool for post-conflict recovery and spatial reconciliation
in divided cities



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Att återskapa gemensam mark - landskapsarkitektur som ett verktyg för post-konflikt återhämtning och rumslig försoning i delade städer

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Summary

Summary

The following chapters examine landscape architecture which engages in contested territories with an emphasis on the way in which landscape architecture can engage with the issues of divided cities or landscapes with similar social, cultural and physical properties. The project focuses specifically on the potential landscape architecture has for promoting or aiding in the reconciliation process of these areas, by examining the following questions.

How can landscape architecture be used to benefit the peace building process of divided cities and landscapes?

How can landscape architecture be used in the process of promoting spatial reconciliation in the case of Belfast?

The investigation begins with a description of the background to the project in Chapter 1, which functions as a brief introduction to the urban phenomena that is divided cities. It then goes on to introduce the different methods and data employed in order to answer the research questions in Chapter 2.

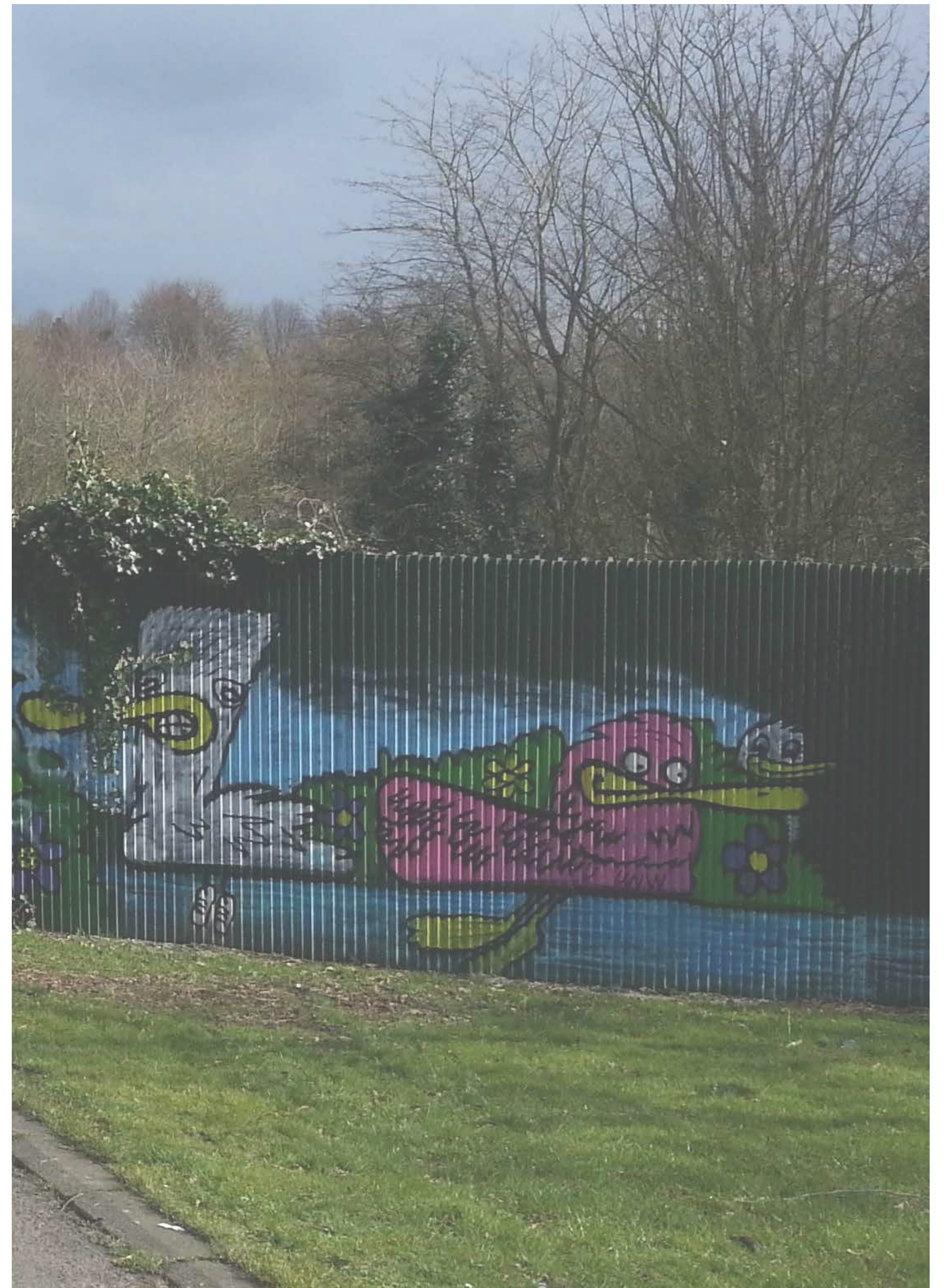
After introducing the problem and the methodology, a global overview of divided cities is performed in Chapter 3. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first describes the divided city in general terms of shared historical and cultural patterns leading up to the state of 'ethnic apartheid' prevalent in this type of city. A summary of these factors serves as a brief introduction to the problem.

The second part of this chapter is an examination of the role landscape architecture has or can play in providing spatial reconciliation in Berlin, Cyprus, Lebanon and Israel as well as other projects in Northern Ireland and Belfast. This investigation is based on literature and interviews with academics and professionals working in Belfast, presenting reflections from two perspectives on the problems and potentials for working with landscape architecture and public space in divided cities.

After presenting the wider context the focus is narrowed down in Chapter 4. This section describes the nature of the division in Belfast and the project area. A historical background of the events leading up to division is followed by descriptions of the present day state. This description is conducted from a compilation of personal observations, reviewed literature, maps and statistical data.

In the fifth chapter, the project presents and discusses the result of the design process. This is done in the form of a proposal for a new public space in North Belfast which relates to the key findings of the investigations into the role of landscape architecture in other divided cities as well as the local context. This proposal presents conceptual ideas and visions for development of an interface area in North Belfast chosen from a particular set of perquisites.

The final chapter, chapter 6, serves as a conclusion for the research questions, a reflection on the potentials and obstacles for landscape architecture in divided cities and a general discussion of the project.



Sammanfattning

Bakgrund

I ‘delade städer’ har våldsamma motsättningar mellan olika etniska och politiska grupper resulterat i en vardagsmiljö där konflikten ständigt gör sig påmind i form av en socialt och fysiskt fragmenterad stadsmiljö fylld av urbana tomrum och förfallna områden. Dessa städer har förvandlats till en labyrint av synliga och osynliga barriärer som i stort sett institutionaliserar synen på ‘de andra’ invånarna som främmande och hotfulla.

Följande kapitel kommer att undersöka hur landskapsarkitektur kan ta sig an dessa omstridda områden. Projektet fokuserar huvudsakligen på potentialen som landskapsarkitektur har i att gynna eller stödja försoningsprocessen i dessa områden, genom att undersöka följande frågor:

Hur kan landskapsarkitektur användas för att gynna fredsprocessen i delade städer och landskap?

Hur kan landskaps arkitektur användas för att stödja rumslig försoning i Belfast?

Avgränsningar

I sin undersökning av landskapsarkitekturens omvärldskontext i dessa frågor avgränsar sig arbetet konceptuellt till ‘delade städer’ eller landskap med liknande sociala, kulturella och fysiska egenskaper. Denna undersökning har gjorts utifrån tre perspektiv: identitet, minne och samarbete.

Dessa lärdommar tillämpas samtidigt i ett projekt i Norra Belfast, där med ett fokus på hur landskapsarkitektur kan bidra till ‘rumslig försoning’ i Norra Belfast, ett multi-disciplinärt angreppssätt till stadsutveckling som syftar till att gynna fredsprocessen genom att arbeta med frågor som segregation, förfall samt fysisk såväl som social splittring.

Metod

För att besvara min frågeställning använde jag mig av utav fallstudie metodik.

Triangulering av ett antal olika datakällor, teorier och tekniker såsom litteratur, skissande, gestaltningsarbete, statistik, inventering, platsobservationer, intervjuer och utvecklandet av ett gestaltningsförslag resulterade i en teori och som behandlar landskapsarkitekturens roll i delade städer.

Teoretiska studier

Litteraturstudier

Litteraturstudien utfördes utifrån källor tagna från ett antal olika discipliner såsom geografi, politik, arkitektur, urbana studier, landskapsarkitektur och sociologi.

Studier av exempel hur landskapsarkitektur och stadsbyggnad har eller kan arbeta med delade städer utfördes utifrån ett ramverk som grundar sig i Madinipours (1996) teorier kring social inkludering och exkludering i staden, framförallt hans teorier om att social inkludering och exkludering kan åstadkommas i både process och produkt.

Intervjuer

Intervjuer utfördes med två olika intervjuobjekt som representerar två olika angripssätt till problematiken som den delade staden står inför med ett fokus på Belfast. Frank Gaffikin representerar det akademiska perspektivet medan Sonia Harrisson och Sean Brennan från Groundwork representerar praktikernas perspektiv på hur man kan angripa frågor som rör den delade staden och Belfast.

Metoder för Belfast projektet

Platsbesök

Under ett besök till Belfast deltog jag i guidade rundvandringar samt workshops och föreläsningar för studenter i programmet Planning in Contested Space vid Queens University of Belfast. Under dessa tillfällen passade jag även på att prata med lokala invånare för att dessutom få ett vardagligt perspektiv på frågan. Dokumentation från dessa tillfällen utfördes med foton samt anteckningar.

Övriga källor för bakgrundsstudier

I övrigt använde jag mig utav kartor, litteratur och statistik för att skapa sig en översikt samt bättre förstå och synliggöra den specifika situationen som råder i Belfast.

Landskapsarkitekturens Roll i Delade Städer

En granskning av teorier och praktiska exempel som rör landskapsarkitekturens potentiella roll utifrån perspektiven minne, identitet och samarbete i andra delade städer och landskap (Israel/Palestina, Libanon/Beirut, Berlin och Cypern/Niccosia) resulterade för mig i den teoretiska sammanställningen av två typer av *försonande landskap* som kan främjas genom landskapsarkitektens produkt eller process. Dessa är aktiva och passiva försonande landskap.

Aktiva försonande landskap stödjer rumslig försoning genom att skapa möjligheter för positiva möten och samarbeten över gränserna i den slutgiltiga produkten eller i genom att engagera invånare från samtliga sidor i konflikten i gränsöverskridande dialoger i designprocessen.

Passiva försonande landskap erkänner rätten för flera identiteter att representeras på sätt som inte stödjer sektariska synsätt och aktiviteter i landskapet. I produkten kan detta stödjas genom att se till att representera samtliga grupperns identitet, användning och historia utan att bidra till fortsatt marginalisering, segregering eller diskriminering i den slutgiltiga produkten.

I processen kan dessa mål stödjas genom att aktivt undvika val som riskerar att bidra till ökad marginalisering, segregering eller diskriminering i projektets gång.

Belfast projektet

Konflikten i Belfast har varit lång och kan sammankopplas med stadens urbanisering och förändring i demografiska mönster. Konflikten upphörde officiellt med fredsavtalet Good Friday Agreement 1998, men sektarisk aktivitet, fysisk och social separering, segregering samt marginalisering är fortfarande vanligt förekommande i staden, framförallt i arbetarklassområden som Norra Belfast, där förekomsten av negativa gränzoner är som mest påtaglig.

Offentliga platser i Belfast

Offentliga utrymmen i Belfast kan delas in i fyra kategorier - etniska, offentliga, kosmopolitiska, neutrala och delade offentliga platser. Etniska platser exkluderar invånare som inte har rätt etnisk/social ‘behörighet’. Detta är den vanligaste formen av offentligt rum i Norra Belfast. Neutrala platser kan användas av samtliga grupper, men dessa platser uppmuntrar inte till dialog eller socialt utbyte mellan dessa grupper och bidrar därmed inte till försoningsprocessen. Belfasts kommersiella stadskärna kan mestadels kategoriseras som neutrala offentliga tum. Kosmopolitiska platser överskrider konfliktens

narrativa strukturer och historia. Dessa är ofta helt nya stadsrum, som exempelvis Titanic Quarter. De tillåter samexistens mellan Belfasts olika grupper, men däremot ofta ett resultat av en exkluderande stadsutvecklingsprocess som ofta grundar sig i ekonomiska drivkrafter som helt ignorerar invånares önskemål och de problem som Belfast står inför. Delade platser är platser som uppmuntrar till möten och dialog mellan Belfasts grupperingar.

Offentliga platser i Norra Belfast

Offentliga platser i Norra Belfast består mest utav etniska platser, uppdelat i Katolska och Protestantiska områden. Detta reflekteras på ett flertal sätt i stadsrummet i form av militariserad och defensiv vardagsarkitektur, sektariska symboler såsom flaggor och målnin-gar som markerar katolskt eller protestantiskt territorium samt en segregerad infrastruktur. Områden som skulle kunna fungera som mötespunkter för båda grupper mellan Katolska och Protestantiska områden delas i många fall dessa av fysiska strukturer, så kallade ‘fredsmurar’, som separerar katolska och protestantiska områden eller fungerar som buffert zoner mellan dessa grupperingar.

Dessa platser är idag ofta övergivna och förfallna, vilket drar till sig sektariskt beteende, upplopp och invånare som söker efter våldsam konfrontation med medlemmar av ‘den andra’ gruppen, speciellt under särskilda perioder då våldsam konfrontation och re-kreationsupplopp är vanligare förekommande till följd av särskilda sektariska marscher och högtider.

Genom att omvandla dessa områden till delade platser skulle man kunna aktivera de övergivna utrymmena till folkliga platser som uppmuntrar till dialog och möten mellan grupperingarna. Landska-psarkitekter skulle kunna fungera som viktiga aktörer i denna pro-cess genom att eftersträva de typer av försonande landskap som jag har identifierat.

Förslaget

Mitt förslag föreslår en omvandling av Skegoneill - en buffert-zon mellan Protestantiskt och Katolska områden i Norra Belfast. Plat-sen är idag övergiven och förfallen, men det finns bevis för att båda grupper har börjat använda platsen som mötesplats.

Förslaget inkorporerar existerande sociala strukturer och funktion-er i ett nytt ramverk som erbjuder nya möjligheter till gränsöver-skridande möten och dialog. Förslaget inkorporerar existerande sociala strukturer och funktioner i ett nytt ramverk som erbjuder nya möjligheter till gemensamma positiva aktiviteter. Det nya tor-get hämtar sin inspiration från LCA:n av omkringliggande miljöer

och Skegoneills placering i Belfasts landskap som grundpelaren för platsens nya karaktär.

Genom att använda sig av material som finns tillgängligt på plat-sen och som karaktäriserar de flesta negativa gränsonerna hoppas förslaget på att kunna skapa en ny positiv identitet anknyten till platskaraktärer som tidigare associerats till negativa värderingar. På så sätt kan gränsonerna i Belfast omvandlas till en tillgång snarare än ett hot mot den rumsliga försoningen. Den här delade offentliga platsen i Norra Belfast som skulle kunna vara den första i en rad sammanlänkande mindre delade fickparker och små torg som kan koppla ihop olika delar av Norra Belfast samt Belfasts kommersiella kärna genom ett nätverk av delade utrymmen och platser.

Reflektion

Förslaget

För att vara så framgångsrik som möjligt i sina försök att engag-era sig i rumslig försoning i delade städer bör landskapsarkitektur sträva efter att skapa platser som fungerar som både aktiva och passiva försonande landskap i såväl produkt som process.

Mitt eget projekt kunde inte använda sig av en aktivt försonande process, men detta beror på grund av ett antal begränsningar. Som sådant så är det inte ett resultat av en dialog med och mellan de olika grupperingarna. Däremot så kan en sådan process resultera i visionära idéer som sedan kan implementeras och anknytas i en aktivt försonande process. Ett resultat av detta arbetssätt är dock att de potentiella resultaten som det här projektet försöker uppnå inte kan mätas utifrån direkta samarbeten och åsikter, utan förb-lir ett spekulativt förslag.

Likasa utgår förslagets estetiska värden utifrån mina egna es-tetiska preferenser även om jag kan motivera dem utifrån mina egna resonemang. Detta är viktigt att poängtera då det i efterhand kan ses som ett provocerande val att använda dessa förfallna om-rådens karaktär som en estetisk förebild för framtida utveckling i Norra Belfast. I städer som Belfast riskerar sådana provokationer att eskalera, vilket skulle kunna vara en anledning att ha valt ett annat formspråk i mitt förslag.

Rumslig försoning som mål

Att fokusera på rumslig försoning i sin gestaltningsprocess riskerar dessutom att negativt påverka de potentiella positiva fördelarna som en kreativt öppen process skulle kunna leda till såsom alter-nativa lösningar och möjligheter för dessa områden som grundar

sig mer i innovativa framtidsvisioner och metoder för att motverka den delade stadens problem.

Metod

Det har gjorts och skrivits väldigt lite i form utav landskapsarkitek-turens roll och delade städer. Mitt arbete använde sig därför i förs-ta hand av andra hands källor, teoretiska slutsatser hämtade från andra discipliner samt visionära förslag. Eftersom en väldigt liten del är baserad på faktiska undersökningar utan snarare på spekulat-ion så finns det en risk att mina teorier och mitt förslag baseras på just spekulat-ion och partiska undersökningar. Eftersom mitt arbete har utgått från en mängd olika metoder, angreps- och arbetssätt finns det även en möjlighet att jag har missat möjliga chanser att fördjupa mig mer i ett specifikt område och därmed nå mer väl-grundade resultat.

Att arbeta med en öppen process var ett arbetssätt som möjlig-gjorde för mig att upptäcka nya infallsvinklar och möjligheter för min gestaltning och mitt skrivande arbete som jag annars hade missat, men det gjorde även arbetet kändes väldigt osäkert då jag hade svårt att se framstegen och kvaliteten i mitt projekt under processen.

Fördelen att kliva utanför sin bekvämlighetszon

Det här projektet har varit lärorikt för mig då det har låtit mig utmana mitt eget perspektiv på vad landskapsarkitektur är, vilka konsekvenser det har och vad det kan vara. Jag anser att många landskapsarkitekter gömmer sig bakom en järnskodd åsikt att allt vi gör per automatik är bra för staden och samhället. Genom att exponera oss för extrema miljöer såsom delade städer tvingas vi att konfrontera vissa ‘bestämda sanningar’ kring hur vi kan påverka samhället och det politiska och sociala landskapet, både positivt och negativt. Att utsätta oss för den här typen av projekt kan ge oss en förståelse för hur kulturella, politiska, sociala, ekonomiska och fysiska aspekter formar och formas av landskapsarkitektur. Genom att förstå dessa relationer kan vi nå en insikt i hur vi kan använda oss utav landskap som ett verktyg för att främja jämställda och rät-tvisa landskap.

Det här arbetet har varit både en personlig och professionell ut-maning för mig. Men det har även varit en möjlighet för mig att fördjupa mig i en reflekterande process i landskapsarkitekturens roll genom att fokusera på en extrem miljö. Framförallt så har det fått mig att reflektera kring relationen mellan landskapsarkitektur och socio-politiska rörelser. Det har gett mig en förståelse för vik-ten av att reflektera kring vems vision och ide av landskap vi repre-senterar i vårt arbete. Eftersom våran praktik i nuläget påverkas kraftigt av ekonomiska krafter så tror jag att dessa ställningstagan-

den och reflektioner i min egen process är viktiga för min pro-essionella stolthet då jag anser att rättvisa och jämställda landskap är kvalitativa landskap.

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CHAPTER 1. Introduction



1.1 Divided Cities - Project Background

Living in a divided city has been described as living ‘a life under siege’. It is a life in a constant war zone without the ability to leave and forget the traumatizing events, and an everyday environment where the conflict is constantly present in the form of the dereliction of physical space and a labyrinth of visible (Picture 2.1) and invisible barriers (Calame, 2005 p. 5). As Calame notes, these interfaces are ‘more than simply expressions of ethnic disturbance’ as they ‘reinforce and encourage prejudicial thinking’ (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p. 41) Belfast politician David Ervine noted this problem when discussing the existence of peace lines, remarking that they ‘institutionalize, virtually, the concept of difference’. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p. 208). Mayor Marouf Zahran of Palestinian settlement of Qualqilya in the Northern West Bank noted that the west bank wall would ‘not bring security, but instead engendering frustration, hopelessness and a rise in support for extremism and militancy.’ She later lost her seat to Hamas (Marouf, interviewed for Dolphin, 2006 p 95). In fact, using divisive strategies as a method to cope with urban conflict has a tendency of reinforcing sectarian antagonisms rather than mitigating them (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). In divided cities the physical fragmentation of the environment results in the destruction of the urban fabric and leaves a city characterized by derelict urban voids and militarized (Picture 2.2 & 2.3) or depraved everyday environments in its wake, particularly evident in the areas adjacent to boundaries between contesting communities (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Morrow, Mackel & Dickson FitzGerald, 2011). These sites serve as powerful reminders of the conflict and perpetuate a symbolic narrative of the ‘erosion of security, social wellbeing and place attachment’ (Boano, 2011 p.38)

I believe this possible connection between the social and physical space of divided cities echoes of the ideas put forth by Henri Lefèbvre, that ‘(social) space is a (social) product’ (Lefèbvre, 1991 p.26). Lefèvres work focused on the city and the urban, which he described as the second form of nature - the urban environment (Lefèbvre, 1976). However, this notion encompasses all scales of the environment. Similarly to Lefèbvre, cultural geographer Denis Cosgrove reminds us that landscape is also a social product. Definitions and conceptions of landscape are as much a result of social and cultural constructs as it is of physical properties. Landscape is a combination of material and metaphysical values. (Cosgrove, 1984). It can be considered to be both a ‘tangible product’ and ‘intangible process’ composed of material resources and the social and cultural interpretations of these physical elements (Makhzoumi, 2009 p.319). Much as the relationship between the city and it’s inhabitants landscape can thus be viewed as a relationship between people and their environment. Humans change the landscape and are at the same time shaped by it. As such landscape can be described as a composite of both nature and culture which simultaneously ‘spans both realms’ (Egoz, Makhzoumi & Pungetti, 2011). Robert Park describes the bond shared by the people and the city as the following:

'In making the city, man has remade himself' (Park, 1967 p.3)



Picture 2.1 Fence protecting a protestant community from thrown projectiles and firebombs

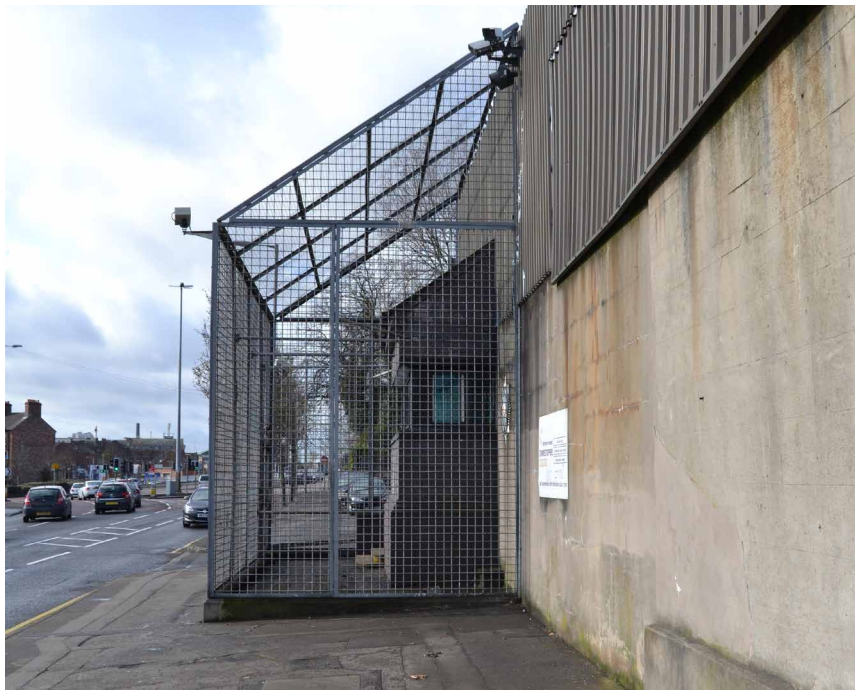
My own interpretation of this relationship is that physical space, mental space and social space may thus be considered to be inevitably tied to each other. That is to say imbalances in social tensions may be affected by the state of the spaces in which they take place, as these spaces shape the mentality of those which inhabit it. The destruction and fragmentation - and on the opposite end the regeneration and reunification - of the landscape could in this case, whether by intent or neglect, reshape our perception of both the social and physical context within which we live. If that is the case, then I believe that landscape architects working with the reconstruction and regeneration of this environment can contribute to replacing contest and division with cooperation and tolerant co-existence.

I must note that I do not believe can be done through a the projects of single discipline. As Gaffikin notes it must be the components of a larger social and political peace building process. However, aspects of spatial intervention could still be used to benefit such a project. (Gaffikin, 2010) One approach which focuses on regeneration of the urban environment in order to engage with issues of division is spatial reconciliation. It can be described as the use of a multi-disciplinary approach to urban development and community planning which focuses on dealing innovatively with issues of segregation, division and deprivation in order to assist an ongoing peace process (Queens University, 2013).

Why landscape architecture?

Heynen, Kaika and Swyngedouw (2006) notes that urban landscapes are shaped by ‘political, social and economic process’ and as a consequence ‘cities are built out of natural resources through socially mediated natural processes’ (Heynen, Kaika & Swyngedouw, 2006 p. 7). Cities could thus be described as ‘the transformation of nature into a new synthesis’ (Gandy, 2002 p.2). I believe that landscape architecture may be seen as a mediator between these processes, employing them as a tool in order to produce space. Egoz, Makhzoumi & Pungetti (2011) notes that ‘by extending the spatial social arena to embrace political ethical ones...landscape could become a positive tool to promote social justice’ (Egoz, Makhzoumi & Pungetti, 2011 p.4). Because it functions as mediator between political, social, economic and natural processes through the design of public space combined with its potential as an agent of social justice, I believe landscape architecture has a lot to contribute to the process of reconciliation in divided cities. In order to investigate how this could be done, this project has been undertaken as study into the possibility of using the landscape architecture as a tool for spatial reconciliation in these conflicted border zones.

This has been done through examination of theoretical and realized proposals as well as studying literature which touches on important aspects of planning, theory and design in contested urban environments or landscapes. This has been done with a focus on divided cities as well as landscapes which exhibits similar physi-



Picture 2.2 Military urbanism - A Belfast police station



Picture 2.3 Definsive architecture - A Belfast rowhouse close to an interface wall protecting windows from thrown projectiles

cal, social and political properties and problems facing this type of urban phenomena. This project is thus an examination of the opportunities for landscape architects to engage with the process of reconciliation through the landscape medium by addressing landscapes where sectarian conflict and ethnic division are major factors in defining and shaping the everyday life and environments of the local communities.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to give myself and the reader an insight into the issues surrounding divided cities, how division and ethnic conflict affects the everyday landscape and how landscape architecture can be used to address these problems. Whether through the practice of a professional team of landscape architects, an individual, or through community participation based design, I believe landscape architecture to be used to benefit the regeneration and peacebuilding process of these extreme cases.

By this particular type of urban phenomena, experiences may be gained which can be applied on other environments facing similar problems, ranging from walled cities to divided landscapes, informal settlements and other landscapes of inequality, segregation and public unrest.

1.3 Delimitations

Conceptually the thesis is focused on the possible opportunities for using landscape architecture as a tool for reconciliation. The theoretical boundary is further defined by focusing the investigation on three main concepts: memory, identity and cooperation.

While my thesis project examines the issues and possibilities for landscape architecture in divided cities in a global context, the investigation and project proposal is focused geographically to Northern Ireland and the city of Belfast, specifically a focus area in North Belfast (see map 2.1). As such, the investigations of the global context and practice are done with prospect of using landscape architecture as a tool for spatial reconciliation within the context of the division of Belfast in mind.

1.4 Research questions

This project has been focused on two main research questions. These questions have formed the foundation for my investigations:

How can landscape architecture be used to benefit the peace building process of divided cities and landscapes?

How can landscape architecture be used in the process of promoting spatial reconciliation in the case of North Belfast?



Map 2.1
Project focus area. Original Map by Chris Karelse, Queens University of Belfast 2013. Map edited digitally by Author. Used with permission.

1.5 Disposition

This thesis consists of two main sections; one section which contains theoretical case studies examining literature and theories relating to issues and opportunities for using landscape architecture and urban development other divided cities and one section which describes a design based case study, where I developed a proposal for a site in Belfast.

The theoretical investigation was undertaken on an international scale. This is a general overview of theories and practice for landscape architecture working with divided cities, albeit with focus on the western/European cases of the divided cities. This section begins by presenting the general characteristics and issues of divided cities. This is followed by a review of possible approaches and solutions to these problems from the perspective of landscape architecture. It draws on experiences from an international context, focusing on five different divided environments. It concludes by formulating a theory of how landscape architecture can benefit spatial reconciliation of divided cities and landscapes.

The design based investigation is undertaken on a smaller, regional scale. This part of the thesis describes more specifically the issues of division in Belfast with a focus on North Belfast.

In general the disposition of this thesis can be described by the diagram below, first presenting an introduction and methodology. This is followed by a presentation of the theoretical investigation and design proposal, finishing with reflections on the results and process of this project. However, both of these investigations were conducted in parallel. For instance, an issue encountered in the design process could take my theoretical investigation into new directions, which in turn could yield insights which I would then try to understand and apply in the proposal. Theory informed the design process, and the design process informed the theoretical investigations. As such, the conclusions arrived to in these chapters were not developed independently after one another, but rather developed together as the project progressed.

As such, while this project is first presents the theoretical investigation and then the design project - rather than a project were the theoretical investigations are undertaken first, and then applied directly in the design proposal - it should be read as a whole where the design proposal chapter and the theoretical chapter are two sides of the investigation, and should be read together.



1.6 Keywords

Shared Space -

Spaces were there *‘there is socially integrated use, and safe and free movement with welcome access for all. It is space that is free from fear, hostility or threat.’* (Goldie & Ruddy, 2010: p.22)

Divided cities -

Cities where regular contestation over the city are combined with a struggle over sovereignty are infused with ‘sentiments challenging state legitimacy and national belonging’ (Gaffikin et al. 2008) Additionally, this project focuses on environments where such conflict have led to violent conflict and extreme physical, social and psychological segregation and division.

Sectarianism -

‘Sectarianism in Ireland is that changing set of ideas and practices, including, crucially, acts of violence, which serves to construct and reproduce the difference between, and unequal status of, Irish Protestants and Catholics’ (McVeigh 1995:643)

Interface -

An interface is a common boundary line between a predominantly Protestant Loyalist/Unionist area and a predominantly Catholic Nationalist/Republican area. An interface community is a community which lives alongside an interface. (Belfast Interface Project, 1998)

Urban Regeneration -

As Gaffikin & Morrissey notes there is a difference to be made between regeneration in a place and regeneration of a place. Urban regeneration in a place deals with the physical and economic improvement of an area, while regeneration of a place also aims to enhance *the ‘life chances of the residents’* (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011).

Spatial reconciliation -

The use of the framework of a multi-disciplinary approach to spatial and community planning which deals innovatively with issues of segregation, division and deprivation in order to assist an ongoing peace process (Queens University, 2013)

Peaceline\Peacewall -

Terminology used to describe a wall or physical object with similar properties which separates an interface area in two, most commonly between Catholic Unionist and Protestant Loyalist communities in Belfast.

CHAPTER 2. Methodology



2.1 Introduction

This project can essentially be read as a case study investigating the urban phenomenon of the divided city with a focus on the role of landscape architecture in this context, specifically in the possibilities and threats for landscape architecture to engage in the process of spatial reconciliation.

I conducted this project as an open investigation into the divided city rather than with a focus on any specific method of investigation. In order to keep an open perspective for the possible paths this investigation could take I thus initially decided to take an open approach to the methodology employed. In the process I examined the phenomena through combining theoretical and practical investigations in the form of literature research, interviews, on-site observations and investigations and the process of developing a proposal for a public square in Belfast. This investigation has been a parallel, circular process rather than a linear process where A follows B follows C. This process left me with a wide collection of data. Most importantly for the final product was distilling a result from all this information. In order to do this I employed case study methodology.

2.2 Case Study Methodology

This project was developed by using case study methodology. Robert K. Yin (2009) describes the case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009:18). Case study methodology can be exploratory, explanatory or descriptive and is useful for developing theories (Yin, 2009).

Rolf Johansson argues that the essence of the case study methodology is triangulation. Triangulation is the ‘combination on different levels of techniques, methods, strategies, or theories’. As such it makes use of a combination of data sources. (Johansson, 2005).

This project makes use of both primary and secondary data sources in this triangulation. These include interviews and on site observation (primary) and literature review, examination and analysis of maps and statistics (secondary).

In case study research generalizations can be achieved by using one or a combination of three principles of reasoning: deductive, inductive or abductive, undertaken through different methods: hypothesis testing (deductive), theory generating (inductive), naturalistic generalisation (abductive) or case synthesizing (abductive) (Johansson, 2005).

This project attempts to answer the research question “How can landscape architecture be used to benefit the peace building process of divided cities and landscapes?” by using inductive reasoning and theory generating, comparing a set of cases and theories to one another in order to arrive at a general theory which attempts to answer this inquiry. The nature of conclusions made from inductive reasoning is that they reach beyond the premises of the specific case. By concluding from a case or cases that a rule is, in fact, operative, we assume that the same rule will be operative in other similar cases (Johansson 2003).

In order to answer the second research question; “How can landscape architecture be used in the process of promoting spatial reconciliation in the case of North Belfast?”, in addition to inductive reasoning I also employed a form of abductive reasoning called naturalistic generalisation. According to Johansson (2003) “Abductive reasoning occurs when we face some unexpected fact, apply some principle (known or created) and conclude what may be the case.” Naturalistic generalisation is the process where generalizations are made from known cases and applied to an actual situation. It is a method employed by designers when “they refer to their repertoire to carry out new designs”. It can be described as a future oriented form of abductive reasoning (Johansson 2003 p.5).

2.3 Gathering Theory

Litteratur review

The main body of the theoretical research was conducted through a literature review. Jon Calames book “Divided Cities” (2005) was used as the main literature when forming a understanding of the conditions leading up to- and the situation in Belfast and other divided cities. A landscape perspective was brought in through a review of the “The Right to Landscape - Contesting Landscape and Human Rights” (2011). Other valuable sources were papers from the “Conflict in Cities and the Contested State” research group, a multi-disciplinary research team carrying out research on divided cities within the fields of architecture, urban studies, politics, geography and sociology. Further references were generally obtained through ‘the snowball method’ which describes the method of how text references in reviewed literature leads to new references, eventually expanding the catalogue of references exponentially. (Wibeck, 2000, p. 68). Literature was also found through searching the databases of scientific journals with a focus on journals landscape architecture & planning, architecture, urban design, geography and sociology. Keywords used were combinations of reconciliation, landscape, architecture, contested cities, sectarian and ethnic conflict, planning and similar terms combined with place names of divided cities.

The study of other examples where practice has been involved with the type of issues relevant to divided cities was partially reviewed within the framework of Madanipours (1996) theory that socially inclusive spaces can be created either through product or process, but adopted to the context of reconciliation. To achieve some form of structure and focus in order to engage in these issues I choose to review the practice. The study was focused on three main concepts identity, memory and cooperation. These concepts were also used as key words when searching for literature.

Interviews

Interviews were used to form an understanding of how academic and professional practice in Belfast is dealing with the subject of division.

Groundwork represents the professional practice in Belfast. It is a non-profit non-government organization active across the UK which was founded in the 1980's. Their work focuses on community and environmental development and improvement of blighted land through locally led projects involving actors from a range of disciplines. They’ve led the Changing Places initiative, a government funded £60 Million post-industrial regeneration programs, transforming 21 major areas of industrial dereliction in the UK. Groundwork Northern Ireland has led several major and minor cross-community projects in NI. In Belfast, their perhaps most internationally famous completed project has been the regeneration of Alexandra Park and the opening of a ‘peace gate’ in the peace wall dividing the park into two.

I was given the opportunity to talk to Sonia Harrison, a registered landscape architect and one of their senior landscape architects, and Sean Brennan, a research/project leader and community liaison for Groundwork. Sonia Harrison was born in the UK, and she has been with Groundwork since its inception in 1981 while Sean Brennan grew up in Belfast. Both have played important roles in many of Groundwork Belfast based projects.

Frank Gaffikin represents the Northern Irish academic perspective. He is a professor at Queens University of Belfast, where he is currently leading the Planning for Spatial Reconciliation research project. He has published several books and articles on urban planning and development, several of which discuss the role of urban planning and design in contested cities. He has worked on research projects in Israel and Nicosia and is a Visiting Senior Fellow at the Great Cities Institute at the University of Illinois and a member of the UK Academy of Urbanism.

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured approach, where several questions were prepared (see Appendix A) with the help of Sociologist Tuula Eriksson at the Institution for Urban and Rural Development at SLU, Ultuna. These questions were used to as a base for the interviews to provide a starting point for the discussion, but the conversations were allowed to take a more open form.

2.4 Case Project - Background Studies

Belfast visit

Guided tours/observation

In order to form a view of the divided city which was not only based in literature, maps and pictures i visited Belfast in March 2013. Many of my personal observations were conducted during a guided tour through the North Belfast area together with Chris Karelse of the Conflict in Cities research project at Queens University of Belfast and Övgu Pelen Karele, a current resident of Belfast and a PhD researcher in architecture at the University of Manchester. The tour started at the Shankill interface and took me North Belfast through several peace lines and both Protestant loyalist and Catholic unionist enclaves.

Student workshop and lecture

I was also allowed to partake in a student workshop involving community representatives and members of Groundwork as well as a lecture on planning in divided cities, both organized by Queens University for the Planning in Contested Space module at the School of Planning, Architecture & Civil Engineering.

Casual conversations

A final form of observation was conducted in the form of casual conversations with a number of unnamed and often - to me - unknown Belfast residents. These were not conducted in any formal form, and this might be seen as anecdotal evidence, but they did provide me with the perspective of the everyday “ordinary” Belfast resident.

Form of documentation

The observations were documented in the form of notes and photographs. Generally these notes and observations were reaffirmed through cross-referencing them with existing literature, maps and statistics.

Maps

James Corner describes the use of maps as a creative practice ‘mapping precipitates its most productive effects through a finding that is also a founding; its agency lies in neither reproduction nor imposition but rather in uncovering realities previously unseen or unimagined’. (Corner, 1999) Because many commonly known boundaries and other aspects of division in Belfast are invisible to the outsider, using maps was key in order to create an informed image of the nature of these issues in city.

As ethnical-ideological demographics of different areas and the boundaries between them were not always evident, using maps provided was key in order to understand how my project site was located in relationship to the interface between catholic-protestant enclaves and the larger context of Belfast. Additionally they provided a valuable resource in order to visualize - both to me and to the reader - the different problems facing North Belfast as a result of the division. The maps were used were base provided to me by Chris Karelse at Queens University of Belfast, UK Police digital crime maps, or maps generated via the 2011 Census by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). In addition I used Google Maps and Street View as a tool for forming a general geographic overview. The maps were digitally edited in Adobe Illustrator in order to increase their legibility to the reader as well as increasing their “aesthetic values”.

Statistics

Statistics used in this thesis were mainly compiled from the 2011 and 2001 census conducted by NISRA. The data obtained from NISRA 2011 Census was focused on the wards present within the boundary of the North Belfast project focus area (see map 2.1). Other sources of data were the crime mapping of the UK Police Service and the Belfast Interface Project. Calculations were made using the calculation tools in Microsoft Excel. The statistics were visualised into charts through digital editing in Adobe Illustrator.

Literature

Similarly to the global investigations, reviewing literature was crucial in order to understand the specific conditions of the division and the urban environment in Belfast. As I’ve already stated cross-referencing notes and observations with literature was also key in order to validate these investigations. Apart from previously mentioned sources notable sources for literature on the specific conditions in Belfast were the Belfast Interface Project, local research projects, planning policies and guidelines developed for the Belfast City Council (such as the Public Space for Shared Belfast research report (Gaffikin, McEldowney, Rafferty & Sterret, 2008) as well as working papers from the Conflict in Cities research initiative.

2.5 Case Project - Inventory and Analysis

Choosing a site

During my visit to Belfast I examined several different possible locations for a project in North Belfast, some examined beforehand via maps, before deciding on Skegoneill. The site was chosen from a number of criteria further explained in Chapter 5.

Site visit

My initial plan was to revisit the site on several different occasions, however, after considerations, I decided that, as an outsider, repeated visits to the site might prove unwise for reasons of safety as repeated visits could lead to suspicion and expose me to unnecessary risks, at least if i were to visit the site alone.

Contextual Analysis - Landscape Character Assessment

A Landscape Character Assessment was performed to identify the local character of the North Belfast area and surrounding regions. The analysis was performed through using sheets and terminology adopted from the document “Landscape Character Assessment - Guidance for England and Scotland” (Swanwick, 2002). This LCA was then used to aid the decision making in the design of Skegoneill Square. While the LCA is more commonly used in projects working on a larger scale such as landscape planning, conservation and management I chose to use it as a tool to inform design decisions on a smaller scale.

Project Site Analysis

Elements and terminology which were useful for analysis of the site were inspired by Kevin Lynch (1968) method of analysis, Thwaites & Simkins experiential landscape analysis (2007) as well as the S.W.O.T. analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). However, for this project they served as basis for analysis and are not presented in this report. My focus was instead aimed at the opportunities the site represented through the framework of the body of theory gathered during my research.

2.6 Case Project - Developing a Proposal

Initial considerations

I would like to point out that while the proposal is presented as the last section of this document, no part of this project should be viewed as a single component. The theory and the proposal should rather be seen as two sides of a larger investigation into the research questions. Developing the proposal generally served as a way to try to implement the information and conclusions gained from the theoretical investigation and background studies. As such, the proposal can be seen as a laboratory for trying out the physical expression these ideas might take in Belfast rather than a proposal which aims to be ‘realistic’. By this I mean that the objective of the design process did not strive towards be ‘realism’ in the sense that the practical aspects (such as grading, construction details etc.) of the proposal were never major factor in informing design decisions, as practical implementation was never the purpose behind developing the proposal in the first place.

Rather, the proposal should be viewed from the perspective of case study methodology as the proposal can be seen as an engagement in the process of naturalistic generalisation. This was done through methods of sketching and visualisation, traditional methods from the tool box of the landscape architect. However, as previously mentioned the process was not linear, which means that problems encountered in the design process led to investigations in literature and theory, and new concepts or approaches discovered through the theory led created ideas which I would try to implement in the design process of the proposal.

Tools used in the design process

Many different tools were used in the design process of the proposal. As previously described the whole process of writing this document can be viewed as part of the design process. However, some additional tools and methods are worth mentioning in this section.

Theory

For me the writing and the sketching were two sides of the design process. As they were conducted as a parallel process the development and writing of theory influenced my approach to the site. The investigations into the concepts of memory, identity and collaboration were also used as a tool to generate the form and function of the site. While these concepts and the design were influenced by the theoretical investigations they were adapted to fit the resources available to me.

Sketching

In order to try different concepts for the case project proposal I generally used the method sketching, trying out different designs and solutions through both quick sketches and longer, more detailed proposals. The sketches were done both with pen and paper as well as with digital tools such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, AutoCAD and Google SketchUp.

Visualizations

Visualizations for the proposal were created with the help of Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign as well as base maps imported from AutoCAD drawings. The base maps used did not contain units, which mean that all measurements in the proposal were made on an approximation based on assumptions on road width and my own perception from the site rather than actual measurements.

CHAPTER 3.

Divided Cities : Overview



Map 1.1 Examined Current and Recently
Divided Cities

Divided Cities: Overview



Picture 3.1 View of the old wall of Jerusalem. Photo by Ann-Katrin Fredriksson. Used with permission.

3.1 Urban Walls & Ethnic Conflict: A Brief History

The history of urban walls is almost as long as the history of the city itself. In the past, walls served as peripheral barriers, protecting the cities’ boundaries and its inhabitants against the threatening outside world (for example the old city wall of Jerusalem, see picture 3.1) (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). As Lewis Mumford notes ‘five centuries of violence, paralysis, and uncertainty had created in the European heart a profound desire for security’ (Mumford, 1960 p.14) Walls were invented as a tool employed by humans to create a safe habitat which could safeguard them from external threats (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

Realizing that all the inhabitants of cities would suffer equally if the defence against these threats didn’t hold, the urban dwell-

“Managing the wall became a unifying task, forming the collective urban identity which was one of the drivers behind the financial and cultural success of the city”

ers formed a solidarity amongst themselves which was, to some extent, indifferent of otherwise segregating social factors such as wealth and status. The future of the individual became interconnected with the future of the urban population and the city itself. As a consequence a social contract was formed between the citizens and the urban managers. Managing the wall became a unifying task, forming the collective urban identity. This can be considered one of the drivers behind the financial and cultural success of the city and the proto-form of the idea of the city as a cultural melting pot and arena for social exchange. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

However, with the invention of increasingly advanced military technologies, the effectiveness of these urban fortifications decreased. Keeping the defensive architecture up-to-date with the military arms race soon proved to be a heavy burden on the residents of fortified cities. The costs of maintaining these fortifications were extremely high and eventually led to strained relationships within

the city and eventually the function and symbolism of walls as an urban architectural element ensuring the safety and economic prosperity of the city faded. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). The loss of “a shared fate” coupled with an increased scale of the urban environment led to a shift i the urban populous’ sense of identity shifted from being interconnected with the city to smaller urban units tied together by ethnicity, class and religion. This shift increased tensions in the city as prejudice and hostile intergroup rivalries between these groups had hitherto been set aside in aid of the greater good because of a sense of collective fate. Without the unifying task of defending the city, there was nothing to keep these conflicts from resurfacing. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

The erosion of the unifying social contract and the hostile tensions which followed had consequences which resonated across all scales of the environment. The 20th century saw an increased prevalence of internal conflicts, wars within nations rather than between them. These conflicts - often sectarian in nature - have been on a rise since the end of World War II. By the 1960s internal ethno-religious struggles within nations outnumbered all other conflicts put together (Rapoport, 1996) This trend continued throughout the 20th century, with internal sectarian conflicts surfacing increasingly often during the 1990s (Crawford, 1998). The nature of these conflicts are often ‘long, peculiarly intense and recurring’, and the longevity of sectarian conflicts in particular has greatly increased during the last century, lasting six times longer than their 19th century counterparts. (Rapoport, 1996 p. 18). The prolonged nature of these conflicts may be attributed to several factors but perhaps the most crucial factor of all is identity and its relationship to space. When international conflicts end and peace agreements are made, each side is free to return to their own space. In internal wars there is no withdrawal of forces in the traditional sense. As such, the protagonists have to share the same physical and politi-

cal space (Rapoport, 1996). Since both sides have to continue to live side by side, everyday confrontations which would otherwise be negated by distance are more likely to occur and may escalate into renewed tensions (Rapoport, 1996).

If diplomatic interventions fail to resolve these tensions may escalate into resumed hostilities and sectarian conflict. When faced with a situation where inter-communal peace negotiations have failed urban authorities often resort to partitioning of the urban environment in the name of peace, employing the strategy which successfully protected urban residents from violence in the past (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). Unlike the walls which kept urban citizens safe from a perceived external hostile threat in the past, internal boundaries in these cases are employed in order to protect communities from each other (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Gaffikin & Morrissey 2011). These measures are often treated as temporary strategies, but history and contemporary cases indicate, these boundaries have a tendency to become permanent elements. Despite its controversial nature this strategy is gaining support in the contested cities of the world (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009) Davis notes that as similar patterns of ethno-national, religious and sovereignty tensions to those exhibited by existing divided cities continue to surface across the globe, divided cities does not seem to be a thing of the past (Davis, 2011).

3.2 Divided Cities - Common denominators

Definitions

Before embarking onto the intricate conceptual realm of divided cities, it is important to acknowledge that the divided city is not a terminology which can be encapsulated by one definition (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). Most cities and landscapes can be considered to be contested as long as there is some form of competition over the preferable interpretation or use of land, and as Frank Gaffikin (2010) reminds us that there will almost always be some form of competition over land-use. This is especially true in urban environment, where space is can often be a scarce resource (Gaffikin, 2010). In fact the production of space itself can be described as a ‘battlefield of contending forces’ where architecture and planning is a ‘struggle among waging discourses’ (Boyer, 1994:35). Indeed if turn our gaze to history, as David Harvey (2003) reminds us, struggle, conflict and confrontation may even be considered to be the natural state of life within the city. He describes the city as a ‘historical site of destructive creationism’. According to Harvey, the question is whether or not these confrontations serve as a ‘destructive or a creative force’ (Harvey, 2003 p.939). In the divided city contestation over urban space has led to a destructive form of tangible and intangible division which expresses itself as an everyday environment characterized both physically and socially by segregation and exclusion (Gaffikin & Morissey 2011, Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Gaffikin et al, 2008).

While social exclusion can be defined in many ways, Ali Madanipours (1998) definition of social exclusion is useful to the context of the divided city as it describes this relationship between social

Increasing social polarisation - that is the increasing gap and division within cities ‘between rich and poor; between the powerful and the powerless; between different ethnic, racial and religious groupings; and between genders’ - has been pointed out as one of the most increasingly common themes of the contemporary urban city. (Dear, 2000, p.160) The divided city is the physical manifestation of how this pattern may result in open conflict over resources and power (Calame, 2005; Gaffikin & Morrissey 2011). As Benvenisti notes the physical partitions of divided cities may be viewed as ‘the spatial expression of inherently conflicting current conditions that characterize plural societies’ (Benvenisti 1986:87). As such issues are not limited to a particular type of city or region, but are the result of processes found in almost every city (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009, Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). As Misselwitz & Rieniets notes there is already a ‘growing fear of “the other”’ which is beginning to manifest itself in cities across Europe and America (Misselwitz & Rieniets, 2006 p.32). Divided cities symbolize the threat this pattern poses to our future cities if it is allowed to continue. Belfast and cities suffering from similar conditions may serve as useful cases for studying causes of and solutions for division in order to develop preventive strategies for issues which will have to be dealt with in the future planning of the 21st century city.

processes and the urban landscape:

‘Social Exclusion is defined as a multi-dimensional process, in which various forms of exclusion are combined: participation in decision making and political processes, access to employment and material resources, and integration into common cultural processes. When combined, they create acute forms of exclusion that a spatial manifestation in particular neighbourhoods.’ (Madanipour, Cars & Allen, 1998 p. 22)

This definition describes how social exclusion may shape the built environment of cities in general. However, there is an important distinction to be made between cities where social exclusion and division is based on differences in socio-economic and ethno-religious status and the so called divided cities. In the later the basis of the contestation over the city is combined with a struggle over sovereignty (Gaffikin & Morrisson, 2011). In these cities conflicts over “pluralism” and “differential power and status” which can be found in most cities is infected by popular sentiments challenging “state legitimacy and national belonging” (Gaffikin et al, 2008, Gaffikin 2010).

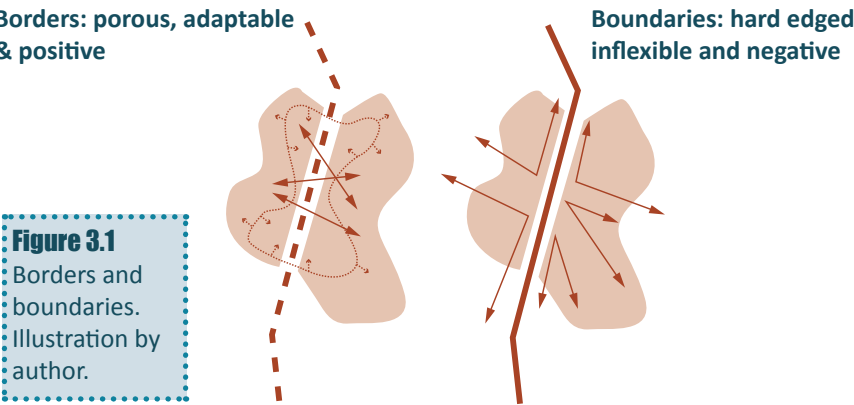
For the purpose of this project I focused on places were this contest has escalated into violent sectarian conflict and has led to patterns of physical, psychological and social fracturing resulting in an environment dominated by man-made boundaries manifested along ethnic and political fault-lines.



Picture 3.3 Peace-promoting mural on peace wall dividing New Lodge and Tigers Bay

Borders and boundaries

In order to understand the divided city, it is important to understand the difference between two different types of edges that exist in cities; borders and boundaries (see figure 2.1). In “ordinary” cities borders can be considered an essential element for a diverse social environment (Alexander, 1977). Borders exist in almost every city where plural ethnic or cultural communities co-exist. Borders are ‘porous, adaptable and positive’ (Gaffikin, McElDowney, Rafferty & Sterret, 2008 p.6). They are places for cross-community interaction, active spaces where diversity his high and interaction is common. In a regular city, one example of a border could be the mixed-use street between two communities (Sennet, 2004). Boundaries on the other hand are ‘hard-edged, inflexible and negative’ (Gaffikin et al, 2008). They are inert edges where population thins out and interaction becomes rare or non-existent. In an ordinary city they could be something perceived as relatively neutral, for example a highway (Sennet, 2004). In a divided city they later are hard etched lines between contested territories which serve as arenas for sectarian dispute. Transforming these boundaries into borders and “shared spaces”, inclusive spaces which provides opportunities for meetings across the divide, is thus a key aspect for the peace building process (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). I believe it is in developing these spaces where landscape architecture may have a role to play in engaging in spatial reconciliation.



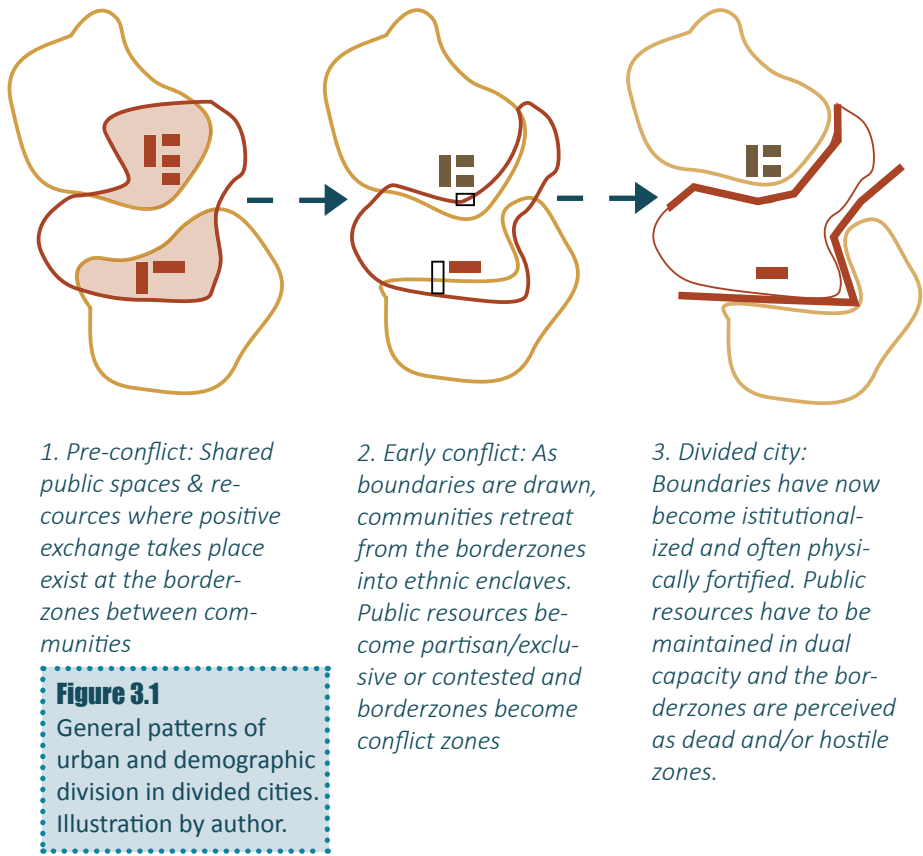
From ethnic tensions to physical partitions

Investigations have identified a number of patterns and conditions shared by several divided cities (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Gaffikin & Morrissey 2011). To begin with, like most ethnic conflicts the antagonisms within divided cities are almost always a representation of a much larger, nationwide conflict (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Gaffikin & Morrissey 2011; Benvenisti, 1986). As Gaffikin & Morrissey reminds us the question of ‘whose city’ is inevitably tied to the question of ‘whose country’ (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011 p.4).

In divided cities, ethnicity and politics are tightly knit together. Ethnicity in these places is in often the most important factor which determines ‘political affiliation and social organization’ (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p.207). Furthermore, because of the nature of democracy is to use statistical majority-minority relationships to determine and inform political decisions, when ethnicity and cultural belonging is bound with political affiliation one community is inevitably bound to be have less representation in government. This can increase tensions between ethno-religious groups (Rapoport, 1996) As majority-minority demographics shift over time, one side is inevitably left with diminishing political influence. This is evident with the Protestant Unionist/Loyalist community of Belfast, where demographic patterns have shifted from a 2/3 majority in favour of Protestants to a 50/50 relationship (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). As an effect, both groups consider themselves to be minorities under siege and threatened by ‘the Other’ (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011, Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

Another phenomena common prior to, during and after the physical partitioning of divided cities is the clustering of the cities’ population (see figure 3.1). This process takes place over time and creates socio-spatial demographic shifts which results in increasingly ethnically homogenous neighbourhoods (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Gaffikin & Morrissey 2011). It is the result of communities trying separate themselves from the opposing factions within the city by occupying specific territories, embracing “their own” within the confines of the territory and excluding everyone outside it (Hasson, 2001).

Local identity in these communities becomes inseparable from a single identity, rejecting notions of pluralism and diversity. There are certainly some minor positive aspects of this cultural homogenisation, such as a increased sense of “solidarity”, “local identity” and “sense of community” within the communities. These are all traditionally positive features in successful urban environments. But in divided cities the homogenisation of the community eventually transforms into isolation and territorial behaviour rejecting people from outside the confines of their neighbourhood becomes the standard for interaction with others. Eventually, the benefits of these values are overshadowed by the negative consequences of ethnic clustering (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011 Gaffikin et al 2008, Gaffikin 2010, Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).



Once these patterns of clustering appear the probability of positive everyday meetings with non-hostile members of the other community which could disprove the negative stereotypes from the other side of the interface start to decrease, and with it the sympathy for the needs of the other communities. A dual form of perceived minority arises where ‘each side sees itself as a sole victim while totally negating the victimization of the Other’ (GurZe’ev, 2003 p.93). Over time this mentality often results in a loss of faith in the fairness of conventional systems of resource allocation and justice. When faced with such uncertainty communities may perceive they have a right to take extraordinary measures to ensure the small community’s access to important spatial resources. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). Territory then becomes a important material asset which must be protected against incursion by “the Other” (Hasson, 2001). When communities become increas-

ingly hostile in their attempts to defend what they consider to be “their” territory, pre-existing borders are transformed into boundaries. If this mentality correlates with a loss of physical security - as a consequence of failed policy or partisan policing and justice - communities may perceive a need to take these matters into their own hands giving rise to vigilantism, intimidation of members of others and territorial markings. As matters escalate, barricades are raised as a temporary measure to address vulnerabilities exposed in the absence of sufficient intervention by urban authorities (one typical example of this pattern can be found in the peace-walls of Belfast, see for example picture 3.3). The erection of boundaries and walls holds attraction as it may be seen as a short term solution to problems of sectarian violence while peaceful negotiations are attempted. However, historical evidence shows us that this strategy has a tendency to become permanent. Additionally, it compounds attempts for reconciliation and regeneration as it creates impediments to urban development and inter-communal cooperation, often creating an entirely new set of problems which often did not exist prior to division (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

Consequences

The most serious consequence of ethnic violence is the physical trauma and loss of life. Preventing this is perhaps the foremost argument behind creating physical partitions along the ethnic boundaries (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). However, the consequences and costs of division stretch much further than the direct results of violent confrontation. As Calame notes, they must be ‘calculated terms of exposure to direct and indirect liabilities: those felt in the presence of violence and anxiety, and those felt in the absence of opportunity and social health’ (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p.162). Additionally as David Byrne notes, exclusion ‘determines the lives of the individuals and the collectives who are excluded and of those individuals and collectives who are not’ (Byrne, 2007 pg. 2). This is perhaps nowhere as evident as it is in divided cities. A friend and Belfast resident noted the Catholic Protestant relationship has such an important aspect in all manners of politics and everyday life that he felt he could never feel a sense of belonging in Belfast because he wasn’t a part of the conflict ¹. This underlines just how entrenched the concept of identity can become in determining the shape of everyday life and social relations in these cities.

Calame reminds us that this territorial behaviour has major consequences on public space as division tends to remove access to traditionally ‘shared’ spatial resources. He notes that physical partitions often appear in border areas where are high concentrations of both communities on both sides of the demarcation line. Because of the close proximity to both communities, public places in these areas served as important places for activities and interaction between communities in the past (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). In divided cities these spaces are often considered important resources for

¹ Notes from Belfast visit, 2013-03-15

both communities due to their location and thus likely to be more heavily contested and more likely to house random confrontations. Traditional elements of the urban landscape such as parks, town squares and other public green spaces thus become areas associated with conflict and violence. As a consequence, the urban citizens avoid these spaces, creating voids in the urban fabric where there should be spaces of interaction. Deprived of their function as social spaces, these spaces become prone to dereliction, overgrowth and general physical deprivation.

As communities begin to retreat into ethnic enclaves and the few areas where positive meetings may transpire are transformed into hostile boundaries the likelihood of everyday interactions with the other community decreases until it is almost non-existent (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). As a consequence shared spaces which could allow for everyday meetings with members of the other community to counteract the negative stereotypes become a scarce commodity in divided cities (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011).

In this environment fear, distrust and alienation of the other community increases as prejudices and/or demonising mental images of the other community are allowed to incubate (Benvenisti, 1986). This mentality of distrust was described by a Belfast politician as mind-set shaped by prejudice, intolerance and fear where communities in his own words ‘knows how evil and devious the other side is going to be even before the other side has thought about being evil.....each side presumes that the other side doesn’t live a normal life. The other side lives a life that is calculating unreasonable, and evil towards us.’ (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p.227) When this pattern is allowed to continue, the divided city is transformed into a patchwork of socially exclusive communities, often separated spatially. For example, in 2001 approximately 50% of Belfasts population lived in wards with either 90% Protestant or 90% Catholic population (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011)

As the possibility to move freely within the city decreases access to such as roads, municipal services schools, places of employment, medical facilities and other public resources become restricted to members of all communities. In the long run this clustering not only ensures the continued existence of division but has negative practical consequences as well, as the size of communities decrease beyond the point of economic viability. In order to survive communities become dependent on federal funding and non-profit subsidies. In order to provide every citizen with access to these resources they have to be maintained in dual capacity, a procedure which is extremely ineffective and puts a heavy strain on economic and spatial resources (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). In the long run this pattern affects not only the clustered communities themselves, but the entire population of the city. As a result of the measures required to address the conflict and its consequences public resources are drained, removing access to them from ‘ordinary’ citizens.

In the wide context, the consequences of division is summarised in the following quote from Gaffikin & Morrisseys 2011 report Planning in Divided Cities:

‘Conflict and division affect the city’s image as an investment location. Considerable resources, which could be devoted to social need or urban regeneration, continue to be applied to deal with security issues. Services and amenities face the extra cost of delivering to divided communities. The segmentation of housing and labour markets reduces the efficiency of the operation. In short, there are significant economic, as well as human and social, costs in a divided city.’ (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011 p.219)

Another problem in divided cities is that while the city centre may be relatively free of everyday conflict these peripheral areas are usually where the radicalism and violent confrontation is most common. Research based on examples from Jerusalem has indicated that extremism in ethno-religiously divided cities is more prevalent in the urban periphery than in the city centre. It also revealed that ‘the centres of contested cities are receptive to disruption from the peripheral frontiers’ (Pullan, 2011). This may be interpreted as an indicator which shows us that long as division is prevalent in any part of the city, no part of the city will be truly unified.

Impact on public space

Division has consequences on landscape architecture and public spaces as it tends to remove access to traditionally ‘shared’ public space resources. Calame notes that physical partitions often appear in border areas where neighbourhoods where ethnic concentration of contesting communities is high on both sides of the interface. Because of the close proximity to both communities to these spaces would be the places where activities, interaction and co-existence between communities were more common. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

During the conflict these spaces would be important resources for both communities due to their location and thus more likely to be heavily contested. Their relative proximity to both communities would also make random confrontations more likely. Traditional elements of the urban landscape such as parks, town squares and other public green spaces may thus become divided areas associated with conflict and violence (Gaffikin et al. 2008; Goldie & Rudy, 2010).

As a consequence, the urban citizens avoid or even abandon these spaces, creating voids in the urban fabric where there should be spaces of interaction (Morrow et al. 2011). Deprived of their function as social spaces, these spaces become prone to dereliction, overgrowth and general physical deprivation. But it also means

that these areas hold the possibility to once again become the locus around which collaboration and communication between communities could be built. This could be done through development of public spaces whose ‘location, accessibility and aesthetic values’ could be ‘conducive to cross-community, rather than single-community, identification and use.’ (Gaffikin, 2010 p.510).

Conclusions

Walls have been a part of the city since the first permanent settlements. Through the history they have served as positive an uniting elements in the urban environment. In the 20th and 21st century as sectarian struggle came to outnumber ordinary conflict the “enemy” in such conflict was suddenly found within the city, in the adjacent neighbourhood or community. Walls has since then been employed as partitioning elements, dividing the urban residents from each other rather than unifying them.

This division creates heavy strains on current access to as well as prohibiting future opportunities for developing economical, infrastructural and physical resources. The ramifications of partition includes decreased opportunities for social interaction, economic development and has an overall diminishing effect on positive ‘urban experiences’ with regards to social, aesthetical and environmental aspects. These contested spaces have consequences not

only on the community scale but on a city-wide scale as maintaining division and dual infrastructures drain public resources which could be put to better use. Additionally it denies citizens access to social interaction and public resources. And perhaps most important, when division is seen as a solution rather than a problem it fosters a self-fulfilling prophecy, ensuring its own continued existence.

The spaces of division in the urban landscape hold the potential to serve as positive borders, meeting points between socio-ethnic groups where conversation and positive confrontation could occur. However, as long as they remain as boundaries and are left uncared for they will serve as spatial manifestations of mutual social exclusion and seemingly never-ending conflict which further contributes to the perpetuation of these issues.

The opportunity for landscape architects lies in using landscape architecture as a tool to re-engage the borders and create common spaces and opportunities around which the divided fringes can meet, or as Frank Gaffikin puts it “creating shared space across the divide” (Gaffikin, 2010 p.293).



Picture 3.2 One of the new walls of Jerusalem separating Israeli & Palestinian territory. Photo by Anki Fredriksson. Used with permission.

3.3 Landscape Architecture in Divided Cities - Theories & Practice

3.3.1 Introduction

I have approached this investigation into the way in which landscape architecture could be used benefit the reconciliation process of contested cities through the perspective of Ali Madanipours categorization of the creation of socially inclusive spaces. According to Madanipour this can be done through product and/or process (Madanipour, 1996). Additionally, for the purpose of my project I’ve identified three different values which I believe could be important for landscape based approaches to spatial reconciliation in contested environments. They are memory, identity & cooperation. These concepts were all terms I encountered frequently in my literature review, and appeared to me to be central concepts which needs to be engaged by any efforts of post-conflict reconciliation.

These concepts all reappeared frequently in literature relating to ethnic conflict, post-conflict reconstruction, peace-building with regards to divided cities. Fostering a sense of shared identity which does not relate to ethnic or cultural roots appeared to me to be central to several approaches to urban planning and development in divided cities, while addressing the memorycapes of conflict and division seemed to be a necessity in order to allow the victims of prolonged violent conflict to reconcile with- and move beyond the hardships of the past. Encouraging cross-border collaboration appeared to me to be one of the most central goals of peace-building processes in most environments where inter-communal conflict is an issue. These concepts often intersect and I believe they may represent both opportunities and threats to attempts do engage in spatial reconciliation of the divided city.

Contextual differences

The landscapes examined here share similar characteristics as they are all part of a context where division has been a dominant factor in determining the physical, ecological and social fabric of the environment, with very similar consequences on the built environment (as discussed in Chapter 2). However, there are some key differences that should be noted.

In Israel, the conflict is still on-going, and partisan planning ideals are not uncommon (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). Here, many urban development and planning reflect an ethnocratic form of government which favours Jewish citizens and immigrants over Arab citizens, supports extensions of Israeli territorial claims and ‘use instruments of state power such as planning’ in order to ‘discriminate positively toward the protection of Jewish demographic advantage’. (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011 p. 79). As I will show this view affects landscape planning policies and landscape architecture. This concept is sometimes referred to as Zionism. The word is used primarily as a descriptive term for a particular set of political and ideological ideas prevalent in Israel which affect issues of and approaches to ethnic division, and should not be confused with the anti-Semitic context in which the word is sometimes used.

Berlin can be categorized as city which has successfully moved past the division (Conflict in Cities, 2013). It may thus provide many insights into the possibilities for the future of Belfast. However, it must be noted that while Berlin was a divided city in all intents and purposes the socio-spatial split was the result of an ideological conflict between nations (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011) , the division was rather brief when compared to the other cases. Issues regard-

ing ethnic identity and national belonging were thus not as prevalent in Berlin as it has been in Israel, Northern Ireland and Cyprus.

In Beirut the dividing green line has been dismantled and regeneration and post-conflict recovery schemes been regarded as relatively being successfully implemented, but the social division and psychological demarcation lines has been hard to overcome, and the ethnic partition has left ‘an enduring legacy of distrust and instability that is fading slowly’ (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p.58)

Cyprus and Nicosia is perhaps the city which most resembles Belfast in that it’s officially a post-conflict environment where division is still a determinant element in both the physical and social fabric of the Nicosia and the landscape of Cyprus (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p.58). The main difference is that the physical division in Cyprus is much larger in scale. This sets it apart from Belfast’s rather “local” patchwork division. This is in fact a key difference between Belfast and all of the cases mentioned above.

3.3.2 Identity

Relph (1976) describes identity of place as being built upon three main components - physical features, observable activities and functions and meanings and symbols. Landscape architects often use the term *genus loci* for describing this relationship. Identity and its connection to space is also one of the main aspects which ensure the perpetuation of segregation in all divided cities . Rapoport (1996) reminds us that ‘to have one’s own space is a crucial ingredient in identity, and while belligerents in international wars retain separate spaces, participants in internal struggles have to cohabit a territory afterwards.’ This leads to confrontations over identity and place. Gaffikin and Morrisey notes that this ‘conflict over identities and space cannot be erased’, but that it can, however, take a non-violent form (Gaffikin & Morrisey, 2011).

As landscape architects we can be aware of the pitfalls we may face in regards to concepts of identity and space in contested environments in order to not contribute to increased conflict, further exclusion and ethnicization of the public domain .

This requires sensitivity and creativity on part of the landscape architect. Sonia Harrison of Groundwork Northern Ireland notes that it is essential for landscape architects active in Belfast to be aware of the particular situation of the city. As an example she underlines the importance of being aware of the negative impact and certain combinations of colors may have in Belfast. These combinations carry symbolic identity and territorial properties of either side of the conflict. The combination of red, white and blue, as well as orange (because of the protestant loyalist lodge of the Orange Order, this is explained in further detail in chapter 4) implies Protestant Loyalist territory (Picture 3.4 & 3.6) while yellow, green white marks Catholic Nationalist areas (Picture 3.5). Using the wrong combination of colors in a loyalist or unionist areas, even in terms of vegetation and planting labels may thus provoke either community and result in vandalism or increased antagonisms between communities ¹.

This shows how even simple combinations of relatively common colors in the wrong context can be transformed into symbols of



Picture 3.4, Territorial identity conveyed through a mural at the Protestant Loyalist enclave of Cluan Place

territorial exclusion which enforces the notion of a ‘single-identity use’ onto public space .

According to Frank Gaffikin, the opportunity for use of shared symbols around which a unified identity in Belfast is limited. He points out that there’s no common flag for Belfast or any similar unifying symbol around which a common identity can be built. In addition, the protestant and catholic communities have imported symbols of other conflicts. For instance, in protestant areas you can find Israeli flags, not because there are Israeli inhabitants living in the area, but because the protestant community support and identify with what they perceive to be the Israeli states “strong stand against claims of sovereignty” from the Palestinians.¹

Additionally, we have to be aware of whose opportunities for identity we are representing in our design, and similarly whose identity we are not. It can be argued that there is an assumption among the profession that landscape architecture improves place, often without acknowledging whose ideas of improvement we are working towards. A review of the history of the western landscape concept reveals that the beautiful landscape and the experience of landscape are concepts which originate in the upper tiers of society (Cosgrove, 1984). As Constance Petrow reminds us “the profession has always been tied to the powerful” (Petrow, 2011). The hegemony of the powerful in determining the image of the city is not only bound to landscape architecture but extends to almost any practice which involves of place making and city planning. As Boyer (1994) puts it ‘the contemporary arts of city building are derived from the perspective of white, middle-class architectural

¹ Frank Gaffikin, Interview, 2013-03-14



Picture 3.5 (left) & 3.6 (right), Examples of the colourscheme of territorial markers in a Protestant neighbourhood (3.6) and on a Catholic mural (3.5)

and planning officials who worry in a depoliticized fashion about a city’s competitive location in the global restructuring of capital’. (Boyer, 1994 p.4) The aforementioned emphasis on central urban areas rather than the more burdened peripheral areas is perhaps a consequence of this perspective and this is certainly a pattern which has emerged previously within the context of post-war reconstruction of divided cities.

After the war in Lebanon officially ended in 1990 with the regionally brokered political agreement Al Taef, Beirut was to be reconstructed in order to become the centre of the new Lebanon which political leaders envisioned as a future ‘Switzerland of the Orient’, with the central districts of Beirut as its ‘national heart’ (Yahya, 2004). Maha Yahya describes the impact this vision had on the city of Beirut:

‘Consequently, to [re]claim Beirut’s position on the global scene and project a cohesive image to the outside world, the historic centre and with it the city’s identity, had to be de-territorialized, «liberated» from all existing codes and reference points to both past and present. Lebanon’s national identity had to be projected through the city centre as a comprehensible whole, as its capital Beirut became a node in a network of global cities’ (Yahya, 2004)

This is a common approach with ethno-nationally contested cities, which often rely on a homogenous center for a unified identity (Pullan, 2011). However, these schemes may have downsides, they Beirut they regress ‘into a picturesque pastiche and fabricated motifs supposedly reflective of various communities’ Yahyas anal-

¹ Groundworks - Sean Brennan and Sonia Harrisson, Interview, 2013-03-14

ysis of Beirut’s urban development reveals an identity based urban development strategy shaped by neo-liberal economic drivers which hides behind the masque of “local identity” (Yahya, 2004). This approach forgoes strategies which could reinforce a sense of common identity based upon equal representation and tolerant co-existence for a “disneyfied” urban aesthetic - a cultural appropriation of the local identity and vernacular elements of the urban landscape aesthetics by global economic forces. In addition, rather than reuniting the city this form of centralized urban development further distinguishes the peripheral areas as marginal neighborhoods, not only ignoring division between the peripheral communities, but creating a new form of division by increasing the segregation between the peripheral and central districts of the city.

This is a pattern which according to me defines the passive aggressive social exclusion often hard written into the processes which deals with the redevelopment and reimagining of cities (see Harvey, 1996; 2009; 2003 & 2013). This ideological and political process impacts has impacts on the public realm and the urban natures of cities socio-cultural landscapes which is realm within which landscape architects often find themselves (Heynen et al 2006). This shows us that the reconstruction of the identity of the cultural landscape can contribute to increased segregation in divided cities.

However, when such reimagining of the cultural landscape identity is infused with ideological nationalist notions, we run the risk of directly contributing even further to the repression of marginalized communities and ethnic groups, contributing even further to social division and ethnic discrimination. Landscape projects undertaken in Israel within the context of Israel-Palestine conflict provides a good example of how landscape architects unknowingly can contribute to the repression of cultural identities in the landscape of a contested environment (Egoz, 2008; Egoz & Merhav, 2009).

Landscape Architecture and the Israel-Palestine Conflict

In Israel, landscape has been employed as part of an ideological tool which aims to establish a new cultural narrative in the landscape. This strategy uses architecture and landscape architecture as a “symbolic vehicle to create an identity of Jewish belonging to an ancient land”. By focusing efforts of planning and preservation on representing the ‘biblical’ landscape narrative rooted in Christian European perceptions of the Mediterranean Israeli/Palestinian region, landscape is employed to reinforce the identity of Israeli immigrants’ ancient roots to the landscape while similarly neglecting the layers and narratives of the Palestinian heritage. (Egoz, 2008). This affects the cultural landscape in a number of different ways which I will now elaborate upon.

In Israel the Palestinian vernacular has been absorbed into the design language of contemporary Israeli architecture and landscape



Picture 3.7 Checkpoint in Jerusalem. Photo by Ann-Katrin Fredriksson Used with permission.

architecture (Gaffikin, 2010, Egoz 2008). Golzari and Sharif tells us of the destruction of Palestinian historical centres in order to re-use the building materials in Israeli-controlled areas. This process, they tell us, transform the buildings materials, most notably stone, into ‘a political tool under Israeli occupation to create a sense of false identity and supposed ‘roots’ to the land’ (Golzari, 2011 p. 123) Because of this architectural appropriation, many Palestinians perceive Israeli settlements as the ‘symbols of occupation’ (Misselwitz & Rieniets, 2006 p.31) This form of cultural appropriation asserts identity to place by establishing an narrative of heritage through subversion and destruction of the architecture and cultural landscape of an existing one. As I will show, this process extends to landscape architecture.

Helpland notes that Israel’s founding Zionist-Socialist ideology has had a substantial impact on the contemporary Israeli landscape architecture (Helpland, 2003). For example, as Egoz reminds us that the genius loci recalled by contemporary Israeli landscape architecture was constructed as part of the Zionist strategy to root Jewish immigrants in the landscape. This was done partly through the cultural appropriation of Palestinan vernacular landscape elements, for example agricultural stone terraces, irrigation channels and Bustan gardens into the Israeli design language. Many of these elements, in particular stone terraces, symbolise ‘a long lasting and stable relationship with the land’ and as such these elements were claimed by Israelis ‘as one of the tools to ground the immigrants’. Anchoring landscape architecture in the local cultural landscape by incorporating vernacular elements into landscape architecture is not an uncommon practice (Egoz, 2008 p.38). This strategy of re-imagining the cultural and historical identity of the Israeli-Palstinian landscape has resulted in a new genus loci frequently recalled by Israeli landscape architects (Egoz & Merhav, 2009) In this context a critical view is appropriate since, as Egoz reminds us it is also denies ‘the legitimacy of the indigenous people to the land.’ (Egoz, 2008 p.38). Today the agency of incorporating



Picture 3.8 The mound at Hiriya. Photo by Tsahi Petel. Used with permission.

landscapes which represent western notions of biblical landscapes in order to propagate a narrative of the return to a mythical ancestral home while simultaneously neglecting Palestinian narratives has become a regular occurrence in Israeli landscape theory and practice (Egoz, 2008, Egoz & Merhav, 2009).

One example of this reluctance to revealing Palestinian narratives was evident in the international competition for the reclamation of the Hiriya Landfill (picture 3.8), a site which for a long time functioned as the major landfill for Tel Aviv. The mound is located outside Tel-Aviv, and was on top of land belonging to the Arab village of El-Hir, whose residents were relocated during the al Nakbah (Alon Mozez, 2009 p. 34).

The competition was announced in the summer of 2004 and the brief envisioned the park as an ‘experimental laboratory for the future landscapes’ which ‘emphasised ecology, environmental awareness and the use of both natural and recycled materials’. The competition involved teams of several globally recognized landscape architects offices, amongst others LATZ + Partners, Julia Bargman of D.I.R.T studios and Ken Smith. (Alon Mozez, 2009 p. 35)

Shelley Egoz notes that these proposals that while the proposals for the Hiraiya landfill demonstrated ‘critical thinking, imagination, intellect and artistic talent’ and generated innovative responses to the ecological, recreational and environmental issues ‘almost all kept away from exposure of a pertinent cultural history narrative of the site buried underneath the rubbish’. According to Egoz this oimance of the Palestinian heritage in the proposal ‘exposes the domination of Zionist narratives in design’. (Egoz, 2008 pp. 37-38).

Another case which embodies this neglect for Palestinian heritage is Zippori National Park. When Zippori National Park was re-designed in the 1990s, designers were given guidelines to incorporate historical structures retained on the site in the new layout of

the national park. However, similarly to the case of for Hiriya park, the historical Palestinian presence on the site was ignored in the design. Egoz & Merhav points out that this was particularly poignant, since the narrative which the park was supposed to celebrate was a historical period of ‘cultural pluralism of the site in terms of the co-existence of diverse communities’ and ‘a site that presented a glorious, liberal and progressive Jewish culture that had broken former xenophobic barriers and enriched society by sharing and mingling with other cultures.’ Despite this focus on tolerance and co-habitation choose to ignore the archaeological evidence of the village of Saffuriyya, many descendants of which still live in area (Egoz & Merhav, 2009 p. 60).

These projects exemplify the way in which ideas of landscape identity in Israeli landscape architecture has been a construct of Israel’s ethnic politics. As such, it aids in perpetuating institutionalised ethnic discrimination. This serves as a reminder of how social exclusion can be physically manifested in the product of landscape architects.

Such discrimination does not necessarily have to be a conscious decision. Egoz & Merhav reminds us that it can also be a a result of “being born and socialized into ideologies which marginalize ‘the Other’” (Egoz & Merhav, 2009). The issue of creating inclusive landscape architectures relationship thus becomes a question which requires sensitivity to the local context and history as well as self-examination of one’s own place is in the hierarchal structures at hand. Without proper sensitivity landscape architects who work in this context run the risk of becoming “pawns in a forceful political and ideological struggle over claiming territory”, consciously or unconsciously missing the potential for projects to engage in reconciliation (Egoz & Merhav, 2009).

However, as Egoz & Merhav notes ‘narrating the story of the Other in the landscape can make the invisible evident; it could help to deconstruct fear of the Other, contribute to a de-demonizing and rehumanizing of an unknown enemy’. (Egoz & Merhav, 2009 p. 66) If we are aware of the context at hand we can thus contribute to a process of reconciliation by acknowledging both sides and producing landscape architecture which embodies the physical and mental image of a shared landscape.

Identity - Conclusion

This section has shown how elements of landscape architecture may be used as a powerful tool for nationalist ideologies to ethnicize contested territories in order to reinforce the claims to the landscape for a single dominant ethnic group. In this context it shows us how landscape architects may indivertibly aid exclusion and repression through unconscious use of material. On the other end of the spectrum, landscape holds the potential to provide a

medium through which the identity of these minorities might be represented and expressed. It is through acknowledgement and proper use of this potential landscape architects have the potential of revealing these hidden or neglected narratives of identity in their work. However, it should be noted that identity is not something which exists in a solid state. David Harvey argues for the idea that social life is process based, in perpetual change rather than existing in a solid state (Harvey, 1996). It appears to me that since identity is a social construct, it too may be viewed as a fluid concept. If successful border spaces are to be constructed through landscape architecture and public space must therefore acknowledge this fluidity in issues of identity and social properties of a the urban landscape and allow for possible and probable change in the social utilisation of space over time. The public landscape should be open to the whims of its users, allowing for new notions of communal identity to stake its claim to the city.

3.3.3 Memory

The Italian architect Aldo Rossi described the relationship between the city and the collective memory as the following:
The process of commemoration and reconciliation with past trauma might in this perspective be considered to be parallel with the

‘The city itself is the collective memory of its people, and like memory it is associated with objects and places. The city is the locus of collective memory’ (Rossi, 1982)



Picture 3.9 Memorial in North Belfast commemorating deceased members of Protestant Loyalist paramilitary groups

process of physical reconstruction of the scars which remain long after the hostilities in the war-torn landscapes have ceased. When approaching these spaces where traumatic events occurred landscape practitioners must be aware that there are two inherently conflicting needs to take into consideration; the need to remember and the need to move on. (Davis, 2011). In conflict resolution theory, the emphasis is on the later as it points out “the need to think about constructing the future rather than holding onto the past” (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). As Johnsson (2011) notes ‘active forgetting itself plays an important role in the forging of a changed future.’ Khalaf (2005) also notes that ‘without an opportunity to forget there can never be a chance for harmony and genuine co-existence’.

Neither should one understate the importance of representing or incorporating the evidence of the traumatic events of the conflict into any attempts to create a new narrative. Samir Khalaf explains the dangers of ignoring or the past in Beirut is that ‘otherwise, the memory of the war, like the harrowing events themselves, might well be trivialized and forgotten and, hence more likely to be repeated’ (Khalaf, 2005). Adrian Forty (1999 p.9) describes this inherent conflict between remembering and forgetting as a ‘tension present in all effective works of commemoration’.

As previously noted after armed and violent conflict has declined and the city has moved on to a post-conflict scenario, the destruction of property and public space left in the wake of sectarian conflict exposes the inhabitants and victims of the conflict to



Picture 3.10 Another commemorative mural in North Belfast

landscapes in which the narrative of destruction and uprooting is ever present. In this context, reconciling with past hardships is high impossible as long as these landscapes of memory are left unremediated. Establishing new narratives in these sites is a delicate measure which must be balanced between the two aforementioned needs in order for the city to both move on while ensuring that the past is not repeated.

Woodward (2013) argues that these landscapes of ‘mourning and remembrance for past military events’ are a form of military landscapes. Observations on these landscapes provides evidence which ‘point to the limits of attempts to establish appropriate narratives in sites of violence’ (Woodward, 2013 p.8). This is evident in many divided cities, where the issue of physical memorialisation is extremely delicate. Similarly to the concept of identity, the concept of memory can be used to imposing nationalist ideological narratives on the public landscape. Leib reminds us that ‘one place where the power to control the landscape ideologically is most obvious is the placing of public monuments commemorating the past in public spaces’ (Leib, 2002, p. 289)

In Belfast there are numerous unofficial murals and memorials commemorating individual casualties of the main republican and loyalist paramilitary organisations (for examples, see picture 3.8 3.9 & 3.10). However, as Bairner notes these As Bairner notes, these memorials ‘are part of people’s daily experience, taken for granted perhaps but still capable of helping to reinforce the desire for communal separation’ (Bairner, 2008). These types of memorials may prove problematic as they function as a form of ‘partisan heritage’ (Graham & McDowell, 2007). They monopolize on grievance on the part of one side of the conflict, perpetuating patterns of exclusion, territoriality and division, prohibiting rather than aiding the process of reconciliation. As Graham & McDowell notes these types of landscapes of memory may aggravate the process of cohesive spatial reconciliation as they perpetuate a situation where ‘memory and practices of commemoration play a prominent role in political contestation at the expense of narratives of recognition, reflection, acceptance and reconciliation’ (Graham & McDowell 2007 p. 349). Research conducted on the memorials practices of Croats and Serbs in the Croatian city of Vukovar suggests that this type of ‘competitive’ memorialisation may even serve to transform purely psychological boundaries into physical territorial boundaries in the city (Baillie, 2012). They may thus in effect create a divided city condition where none existed.

Graham & Whelan describes these spaces in Belfast as ‘the chauvinistic, intolerant, and authoritarian material reality of the commemorative landscape which helps mark and bound space and reinforces the territoriality vested in spaces of hate that underpins politics in Northern Ireland’ (Graham & Whelan, 2007 p. 492). In short, Belfast has a troubled relationship with its landscapes of memory.



Picture 3.11 A Preserved section of the Berlin Wall at Topografi des Terror

To me, it appears that one of the main issues within the discourse on the landscapes of memory in divided cities, specifically Belfast, is perhaps that the focus is so heavily inclined towards viewing any commemorative practice in public space, particularly involving artefacts of division, as this kind of sectarian memorial, rather than regarding them as an opportunity for preserving the lessons of past for the future. There are examples where landscape architecture has managed to retain aspects of memory while simultaneously transforming these traumatic sites into optimistic spaces. Berlin is perhaps one of the most successful cities in this aspect. In Berlin the vast areas of the no-man’s land between former West and East Berlin has been transformed into public space, benefitting the process of spatial reconciliation without destroying all evidence of the past division.

Landscape Architecture in Berlin - Preserving divided history while building a shared future

Similarly to modern-day approach in Belfast, the response to the Berlin Wall after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 was initially to completely demolish and remove all remnants of the border fortifications (Schofield, Klausmeier & Purbrick, 2006). This type of demolition of buildings and monuments, so-called iconoclasm, can in itself be considered to be an act which is used to ‘achieve forgetting’ and was common throughout the Eastern Europe following the Soviet Union (Forty, 1999). Destruction of the wall thus served a purpose in the process of reconciliation with the public process



Picture 3.12 Traces marking the extent of the Berlin wall inlaid in a street walk in Berlin. Photo by Ann-Katrin Fredriksson. Used with permission.

of commemoration. Already back then there were criticisms being raised against the act of so completely eradicating all traces of a period which had had such a massive impact on the lives of the cities inhabitants (Schofield et al. 2006). However, it wasn't until 2006 that the Berlin Senate passed the Master plan to Preserve the Memory of the Berlin Wall (Arbeitsgruppe Gesamtkonzept Berliner Mauer, 2006)

Today many public spaces of Berlin contain artefacts of the Cold-War partition (for example picture 3.12), amongst others Mauerpark, The Berlin Wall Memorial, the East Side Gallery, Potsdamerplatz and Topografi des Terror (picture 3.11) all incorporate remnants of the wall and/or symbolic representations of the division.

Mauerpark is a park which was transformed from a section of the former border running from Behmstrasse to Bernauer Strasse. The park was designed by landscape architect Gustav Lange and was realised in 1993 (BSDUDE, 2013). In the Mauerpark, transformation of parts of the 'death-strip' into a public park ensures the preservation of the remnants of the wall while simultaneously while for all intents and purposes simultaneously functioning as a public park with a myriad of activities.

To me, the preservation of the wall in Berlin Wall Memorial resembles an open-air museum more than it does a memorial, serving as a sort of modern archaeological exhibition which shows us what Berlin was like during the GDR. A snapshot of divided Berlin, preserved in stasis for future generations to experience. The com-

pleted memorial will include four sections, each section focus on a different aspect of division.

The East Side Gallery (Picture 3.13) also performs more akin to an art museum than a memorial and is a popular space for both tourists and local residents in present day Berlin. Recent protests against the dismantling of a 20-meter section of the Berlin Wall at the East Side Gallery to make room for condos at the attractive property shows just how much sentiments regarding the Wall has shifted (Die Spiegel, 2013) This marks an interesting contrast to the enthusiasm with which the wall was dismantled in 1989 (Schofield et al. 2006). It shows us how inherit meaning in these artefacts of partition can change radically over time. It also exemplifies how important it is to preserve these artefacts before they are destroyed by through urban development as a consequence of a rise in market property value. Anna Grichting writes 'What have we learned from Berlin? It is that projects that memorialize a division must anticipate a solution and be part of that solution, since once there is a political unification, the economic forces of real estate rapidly erase the traces of the past' (Grichting, 2011a p.23)

My own interpretation of the reason is that the success of Berlins landscape of memory are the result of two factors, an overall focus on archaeological preservation rather than commemoration and the incorporation of the death-strip and the wall into new socio-cultural contexts. By taking an almost archaeological approach to the artefacts of partition history is preserved for future generations while avoiding an obsessive and destructive focus on past traumas.

Today, the Wall is symbolizes of both division and unity (Saunders, 2009). It is seen as a symbol of division overcome by a peaceful revolution and not only viewed as a representation of the painful past (Schofield et al. 2006). Through preserving these artefacts of the division and making them integral parts of new cultural landscapes rather than destroying them, Mauerpark, the East Side Gallery and the Berlin Wall Memorial are all examples of how this approach to product, that is the parks and their incorporation of the artefacts of partition, can present opportunities for the reconciliation and reunification of divided cities.

Memory - Conclusion

Landscape architecture in Berlin has been used as dealing with the trauma and grief caused by a partitioned state, and home to memorial spaces to the most horrific examples of ethnic discrimination and segregation in the history of Europe. Landscape architecture in Berlin has had to deal with representing a difficult past, both for oppressors and the oppressed. Landscape architecture reflects this fact by embracing the balance between the right to remember and the right to forget.



Picture 3.13 Mural on the Berlin Wall at the East Side Gallery. Photo by Ann-Katrin Fredriksson. Used with permission.

As Belfast moves further from the conflict, the desire to move on from a traumatic part of its history there may result in a similar public opinion to that which called for the complete destruction of the Berlin Wall in the 1990s. There are many lessons to be learned from Berlin with regards to how to view these physical artefacts of divisions. If it teaches us anything it is that there may lie future benefits in preserving some of the evidence of division, which has been a significant part of the city’s’ history, by shifting the function of these landscapes of memory from partisan spaces of commemoration to a new perspective which views the artefacts of the division and its consequences as potential areas of future archaeological importance.

Berlin is one of few examples of a divided city which has left partition behind it and now completely exists in a post-division state. It is important to acknowledge that the division of Berlin differs from most divided cities in that it was the result of forced division with its roots in a political and international conflict, rather than a sectarian and internal conflict. Several of the common denominators prevalent in other divided cities such as sectarian conflict and clustering were never a major issue in Berlin. This being said, when dealing with this form approach in divided cities, one must be prepared for the risk of sectarian appropriation of these artefacts. Despite this risk, I think the opportunities for the future cultural importance of such artefacts outweigh the risks, especially when one regards the importance of the symbolic, economic and cultural importance the Berlin wall has in present day Berlin.

3.3.4 Collaboration

Engaging in reconciliation through brining communities in a collaborative approach is perhaps one of the most obvious approaches in a contested environment. Evidence suggests that in order for this approach to be effective in divided cities collaboration must be ‘cross-cutting’ rather than focused on a single communal identity. As Murtagh (2002) notes

‘Single identity work in a Northern Ireland context is designed to build community confidence to a stage where cross-community contact and reconciliation can be attempted at some point in the future. Yet this is a spurious and uncertain connection, and there is little in the way of significant empirical evidence to suggest that this happens in practice...Bonding identities through single identity work contains the danger that exclusive, imagined or politically convenient identities can be reinforced thus minimising, not reinforcing, the chances for bridging or integration’ (Murtagh, 2002 p.3)

The idea of using environmental improvement and conservation as a tool around which to engage in a peace building process across borders can be traced to the 20th century. Today there are many

projects across the globe which builds cooperation and relations across borders through engaging both sides in environmental conservation. In these cases the peace building process is executed by engaging dialogue across the border through projects of landscape and environmental conservation of border areas. This particular type of park is known as peace parks (Ali, 2007). The World Conservation Union (IUCN) defines a peace parks as ‘transboundary protected areas that are formally dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and to the promotion of peace and cooperation’ (Sandwith, 2001 p.3)

In short peace parks and transboundary conservation initiatives have notably contributed to the peace process by exhibiting the following benefits:

- **Acting as a symbol of cooperation**
- **Creating an entry point for discussions between neighbouring entities**
- **Creating shared opportunities**
- **Developing a resilient web of relationships**

(Ali, 2007)

With regards to landscape architecture there are some notable examples of this within the context of divided cities. Anna Gricthing notes that the previously discussed Mauerpark was in fact established through neighbourhood initiatives on both sides (Gricthing, 2011a). Her own work focuses on similar concept of landscape as an instigator for reconciliation in Cyprus where the Cyprus Green Line remains ‘a physical and psychological wound that fragments landscapes and divides societies’ (Gricthing, 2011a p.19)

Re-imagining the Green Line of Cyprus

Similarly to Belfast the Greek-Turkish division of Cyprus has its roots in the distant past, dating back to the institutionalized ethnic segregation which followed the islands occupation by the Ottoman Empire in the 17th century. However, relations between Greek Cypriotes and Turkish Cypriotes were relatively tolerant until the 20th century, when inter-ethnic tensions were enflamed as a result of British intervention in an attempt to curb rising anti-colonial sentiments. The subsequent tensions escalated between the 1950-1970’s and the conflict resulted in a massive demographic shift in Cyprus as nearly 40% of pre-partition population were uprooted and relocated to their respective side of the Buffer Zone, transforming the Cypriot cultural landscape from a shared landscape



Picture 3.14 Poster and art installation on the peace wall at Shankill. Photo by Övgu Pelen Karelse. Used with permission.

containing a patchwork of ethnic Greek and Turkish settlements, to a clearly divided counterpart with Turkish settlement in north of the boundary and Greek to the south (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

The first evidence of formal partitioning came in the form of barbed wire and checkpoints in 1956. The division evolved as tensions escalated, leading up to the establishment of the Green Line which formally separated Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot territory in Cyprus, to the physical partitioning of Cyprus in 1974 (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). By this time the Green-Line was a frontline for the conflict in an increasingly polarized Cyprus, and was subsequently transformed into the United Nations Buffer Zone (UNBZ), a barricaded and impermeable no-man’s land stretching for 180 km and varying in from 3.5 meters to 5 kilometres in width (Grichting, 2011b).

The division had an especially large impact on Nicosia, as it disrupted the fabric of the city and saw the city centre, which previous to the partition constituted ‘the most vibrant and cooperative sector’ of the city, transformed into the no-mans land of the buffer zone. Today, efforts are being undertaken in order to achieve ‘a comprehensive peace settlement’ and reunite the communities Cyprus, but as of 2013 the buffer zone remains a fracture which splits Nicosia and the landscape of Cyprus in two (see Map 4.1) (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p.141). However, the Buffer Zone has also created a new ecological landscape in Cyprus wich links a ‘unique succession of landscapes’ and ‘constitutes a cross-section of the many habitats and ecologies of the island’ (Grichting, 2011a p.19). This landscape contains several endangered species of both flora and fauna, preserved much thanks to the special conditions bestowed upon this environment by the division. Grichting points out that a development of this landscape with a focus on environmental conservation could be used as a possible framework for reconciliation in Cyprus (Grichting, 2011b).

Grichtings proposal for the buffer zone, developed together with the Harvard Program on Conflict Research envisions a transformation of the ecological corridor which the Buffer Zone between Greek and Turkish Cyprus into a peace park which would use environmental conservation within the buffer zone as ‘a catalyst for reconciliation’ (Grichting, 2011a p.18) Her proposal attempts to create positive visions for possible future uses for the Green Line through focusing on the unique ecological properties which exist in the buffer zone as a result of the unique environmental properties which has been the unintended consequence of the enforced no-man’s land dividing Cyprus (Grichting, 2011a; Grichting 2011b). She envisions a future where the borderzone has been transformed into a peace park, with institutions, activities and functions centred around cross-border environmental preservation and “green tourism”, such as Green Line Eco-Loges, farming communities &



Farmers Markets. Her proposal envisions the locations of these activities along former military structures, located along a future network of bicycle- and pedestrian routes which has been established on the former patrol path (Grichting, 2011a).

In this project, reconciliation is conceived through the collaborative implementation of this proposal, which according to Grichting could be ‘a laboratory for developing new approaches to landscape planning in areas of conflict’ (Grichting, 2011b). Through building strategies of ecological planning around positive evolution of the buffer zone, she argues that the project ‘could transform the perspectives of the conflict from destructive views that are anchored in the past to constructive and sustainable futures that associate the physical and social aspects of reconciliation’ (Grichting, 2011b). According to some theories of conflict resolution visionary creativity and ‘design thinking’ helps projects and individuals to envision a positive image of the future rather than focusing on blame and past (De Bono, 1985). While Grichtings proposal may be an, as of yet, theoretical proposal, but it does speak somewhat about this potential in using landscape as a focal point for initiating positive visions of future scenarios, and using these visions in order to instigate collaboration and conversation between the communities across the divide.

The question is whether this model may be applied on a smaller, more local scale involving communities on the scale of the neighbourhood rather than the large scale project proposed by Grichting. Ginni Lee argues that for landscape as a shared resource to exist as a universal condition, extended negotiation and collaboration with people at the local level is a prerequisite. ‘Such negotiations’ she says ‘result in practical and workable outcomes to

effect demonstrable change’ (Lee, 2011 p.127). Using the process of urban regeneration to bring communities together is advocated by Benvenisti, who argues that the problem in dividing cities is not the ‘monuments’ or the demarcation line, but the people living on both sides of it. ‘If you want to reunite the city’ he says ‘you have to reunite the people and do everything possible to make them come back’ (Benvenisti (2003) interviewed in Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 p.200). This type of facilitating projects needs to be undertaken by what Gaffikin calls ‘border crossers’. These are groups and individual who have generated enough trust with the different factions that they may work as ‘honest brokers’ between them, without being ‘over-directive’ or ‘prescriptive’ (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011 p 263) Calame notes that successful examples of a collaborative approach of urban development on in the divided city generally ‘forfeits grandiose city-wide impacts and invites professionals to take pride in the small successes generated by relatively modest strategies’ (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 pp. 200-201).

The work of Groundwork Northern Ireland is an example of this type of approach from the perspective of landscape architecture working with the reconciliation process on a smaller scale set within the context the divided city of Belfast.

Building cross-community relations through regeneration of public space in Belfast

A good example of landscape architects working with these mechanisms is the work of Groundwork Northern Ireland.

Since the conflict in Northern Ireland ended officially with the Good Friday Agreement Belfast has struggled to reunite its divided neighborhoods. While differences in religious and political affiliation is present across the class spectrum, the extreme ethnic tensions and territorial issues which spawn interfaces and peace lines in Belfast are a predominately an issue in working class neighborhoods (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). Groundwork work engages the interface communities in these areas by engaging the divided communities in communication through planning and design projects for regeneration of vacant lots and defunct public spaces. A notable example of the success of their work is the improvements undertaken in Alexandra Park in North Belfast.

Alexandra park is located in North Belfast between the Catholic Nationalist Newington Area and the Protestant Tigers Bay area. The park was relatively untouched by the conflict Before the Troubles, even though there were already serious tensions in the city. Up until the late 60’s they were innocent places of leisure and relaxation which remained uncontested and shared by all. However, this all changed during the Troubles. The change in did not appear over night, but eventually ordinary visits became less and less frequent as Alexandra Park was transformed into a venue for recreational rioting, drug use and inter-communal violence (Ó Cathaín. 2011).



Picture 3.15 (top) & 3.16 (bottom) The Peace Wall in Alexandra Park

These events culminated in 1994 when, in an attempt to mitigate tensions between the Catholic Unionist Newington area and the Protestant Loyalist Tigers Bay, a ‘Peace line’ was erected across the park (3.15 & 3.16), a wall which divided the park into two (Groundwork, 2013). To this day, it is the only park in Western Europe which is divided by a barricade (European Union, 2011).

Part of the wider initiative “Reconciling Communities Through Regeneration” regeneration of Alexandra Park were recently undertaken by Groundwork NI. The landscape architects at Groundwork worked together with a community steering group, developing and implementing ideas for regeneration of the park through cross-community participatory planning and design. By establishing and working with a cross community steering group involving various residents associations and community development groups to facilitate environmental regeneration of Alexandra Park (picture 3.15 & 3.6), Groundwork succeeded in building enough trust to open up a peace gate in the wall (see picture 3.19) with the support of both communities. (Groundwork, 2013).

For Groundwork project, the initial contact is usually done by their community relations officers. Landscape architects are brought in later in the process, when relationships between the groups and the NGO have already been established. ¹

1 Groundworks - Sean Brennan and Sonia Harrisson, Interview, 2013-03-14

Since Groundwork are typically involved in the frontier of the peace process, where relations are tense and suspicions are high building trust is crucial to the success of any project - Not only between communities, but also between the communities and the landscape architects. Harrissons experience has shown that this process takes time and that as landscape architects it is essential to keep a low profile until the community is familiar and comfortable with ones presence before even beginning to discuss any form of design or vision. According to Harrison landscape architects often has to stay silent community meetings in the initial phase of the projects. She notes that her accent would instantly mark her as an outsider, something which her the target of suspicion, no matter how impartial to the conflict she may be. Building trust with the communities can take months before any sort of discussion regarding possible improvement of public space can be initiated.¹ As a result, the progression of a project may take a long time compared to the “ordinary” time span a landscape projects.

Nevertheless, the results speak for themselves. Harrison notes that involved community members have begun today are beginning imagine activities and structures which takes place across the peace line in Alexandra Park, something which she notes would have been almost impossible a few years ago ¹. The opportunity for reconciling communities by bringing them together through involving them in the design process of landscape architecture is best described by a quote from Sean Brennan in length:

‘Trying to create innovative ways to bring communities together is always the constant quest for people working with contested spaces and divided societies. Generally people are brought together on community relations basis, and you’re talking about big issues which the community can never really resolve. When you come at it from the point of view of landscape architecture you’re actually dealing with the physical and the here and now. These issues the local people can not only decide to transform, but they can see this transformation take place in front of their very eyes.....Using the concept of landscape architecture to create a space through a process is a really innovative and creative way for people to come together.’¹

This process of transformation becomes a positive experience of working with the other community which the community representatives can then feed back into their own community. The benefit of this process, Harrison and Brennan both agrees, is that it creates an experience through which thicker relationships between the both communities can evolve. These relationships can then be ‘banked for a difficult time’ which can work as a “social buffer” for when tensions increase.¹

Engaging in this type of community building through landscape architecture requires time, patience and effort, and part of the success depends on the ideas coming from the community members themselves rather than directly from the landscape architects involved in the project. ‘You can’t come in as a landscape architect and tell people what they should want. Visionary ideas have to be

achieved over time’ Harrison notes¹. While the process is time consuming, it holds the potential to bring the community members a shared positive vision of the future.

However, not all aspects of a collaborative approach in the divided city are positive. Gaffikin reminds us that while community collaboration might usually be regarded as positive terms by urban planners, the situation facing Belfast brings out the possible downsides of this method. As both communities face very similar issues in terms of the poor state of the everyday environment, collaborative approaches in Belfast run the risk of devolving into a dispute over the distribution of resources. This, he notes, is a major obstacle facing any effort for cohesive regeneration plans in Belfast. ¹

Indeed, from the perspective of landscape architecture the results of Groundwork projects (as of yet) are relatively modest in both their scale and character. In Alexandra Park the most prominent changes in terms of landscape architecture was the construction of an informal seating area and a small wooden pier by the pond (see picture 3.17 & 3.18). As such, with regards physical development of public space the approach has so far resulted in relatively minor improvements which to the outsider may appear quite anonymous or even invisible. However, the social impact of these projects is all the greater. One cannot argue with the success these projects have had in improving cross-community relations, instilling hopeful visions of the future in the community and aiding the process of building a peaceful and tolerant North Belfast.

Collaboration - Conclusion

Anna Gricthing and Groundwork’s work are radically different in their scope. The proposal for Beirut’s Green Line is massive in its scale and still a theoretical proposal, while Groundwork approach is more modest and practical, as well as much smaller in scale. However, what they both share is the emphasis on creating positive visions in order to engage communities in reconciliation. These visions can be extremely ambitions in their scope, like Grichtings proposal, or more down-to-earth and relatable like the simple gate in Alexandra Park which allows both communities to make full use of their public space.

However, they both showcase the potential for Landscape Architecture to be used as a framework within in which processes of spatial reconciliation can take place. Anna Gricthings proposal exemplifies the incorporation of this framework within the product, while Groundwork’s projects engages in spatial reconciliation through making cross-community collaboration an integral part of their design process.

The successful reconciliation process which was achieved through the Alexandra Park project reminds us that even the production of relatively modest landscape architecture can have large impacts on improving cross community relationships and contribute to the process of spatial reconciliation.

1 Groundworks - Sean Brennan and Sonia Harrison, Interview, 2013-03-14

2 Frank Gaffikin, Queens Univeristy of Belfast, Interview, 2013-03-13



Picture 3.17 (top left), 3.18 (top right) & 3.19 (bottom) Groundworks improvements in Alexandra Park (3.17 & 3.18) and the Peace Gate (3.19)

3.4 Landscape Architecture In Divided Cities - Conclusion

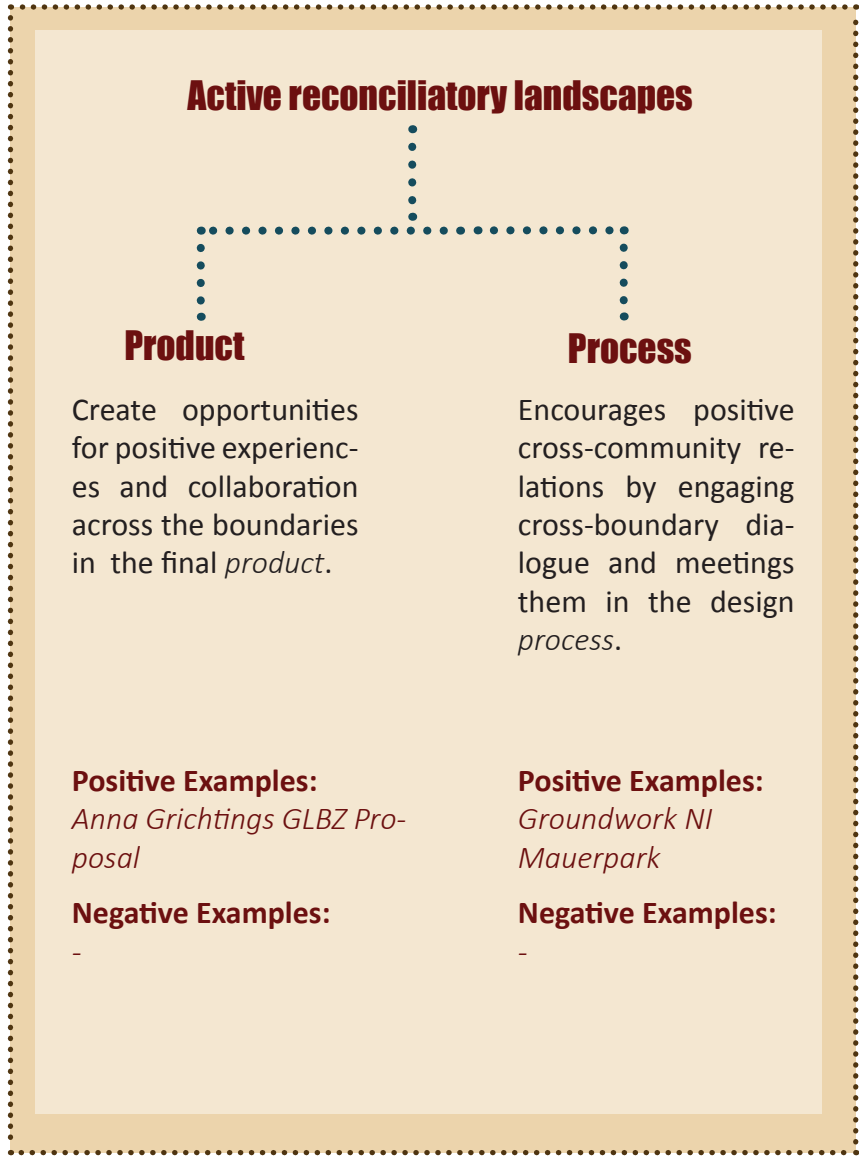
Spatial reconciliation in divided cities - What role for Landscape Architecture?

In the light of these theories and examples it appears to me that there are two ways in which landscape architecture try to engage in spatial reconciliation in divided cities. There can be *active* or *passive* responses to issues of spatial reconciliation (see figure 3.2 & 3.3). I have chosen to describe landscape architecture which employs these methods as *Reconciliatory Landscapes*. The reconciliatory aspects of these landscapes can be infused in either the

Active reconciliatory landscape architecture

An *active landscape process* aims to directly engage in the peace process by involving contending actors in reconciliatory activities. This can be done either through the *process* or the *product*. An example of an active approach in the process is by involving actors and instigating communication and positive engagement between involved parties in the process of creating landscapes.

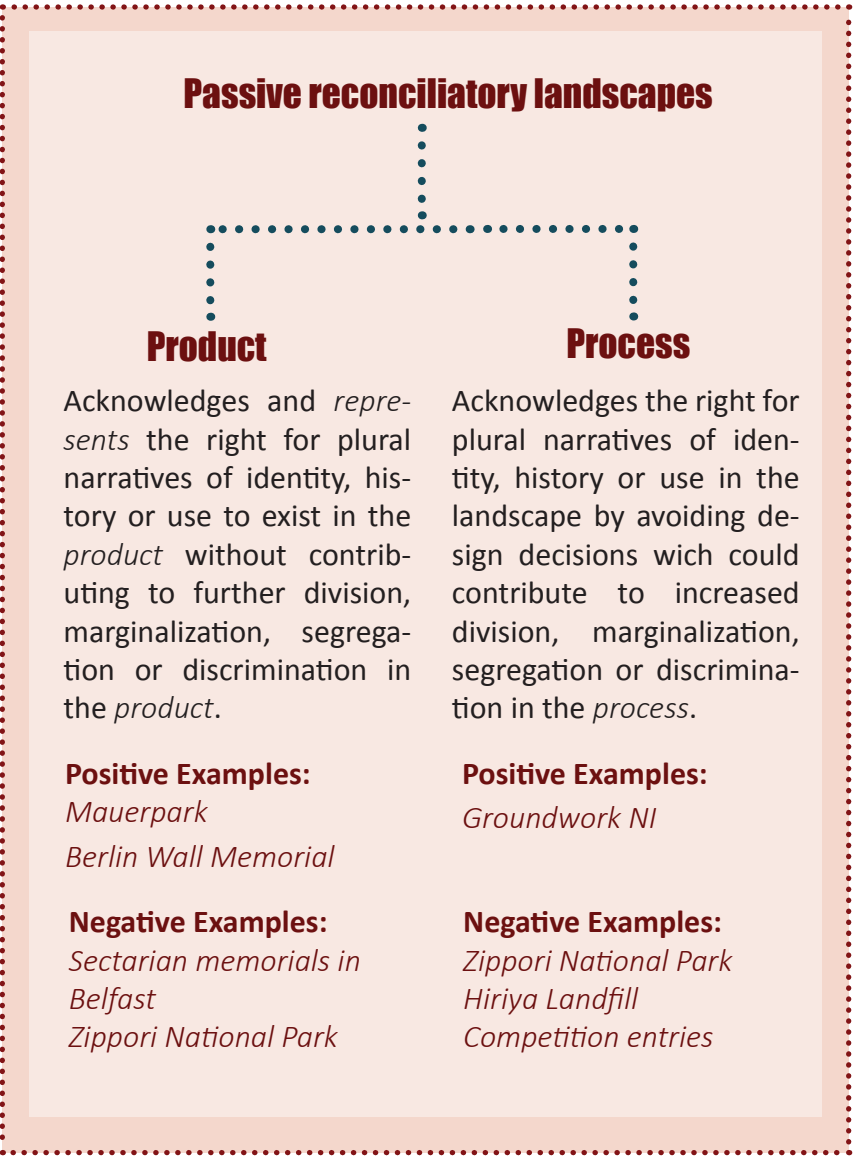
Landscape architecture can also promote an *active reconciliation* in the *product*. This is evident in landscape architecture which engages in reconciliation by planning and providing for spaces were meetings and activities focused around collaboration and interaction with the other community can take place.



product - that is the tangible landscape - or in the *process* of creating these landscapes. These landscapes can be the result of interventions landscape architects or other practitioners who engages with issues of division through the use of the landscape medium, but they could also be the unintended by-products of other political, economic, physical or social processes.

Passive reconciliatory landscape architecture

Passive reconciliatory landscape architecture engages in reconciliation through a less direct approach. It is the result of landscape architects who are critically aware of the social, cultural, historical and political issues at hand in the context of contested landscapes and use this knowledge in order to take informed design decisions. Such landscape architecture deals with issues of division by contributing to social inclusion, promoting equal non-sectarian representation in the landscape and the right for equal access to and interpretation of the landscape for all. This can be done through careful use and exposure of narrative structures which expose and problematize issues of division. It can also be done by not complying with the premises of processes or projects which contributes to further marginalization, segregation, ethnic discrimination or similar social injustices



Picture 3.20 Grafitti at the Skegoneill interface

CHAPTER 4.

BELFAST

CASE PROJECT

Background & Context



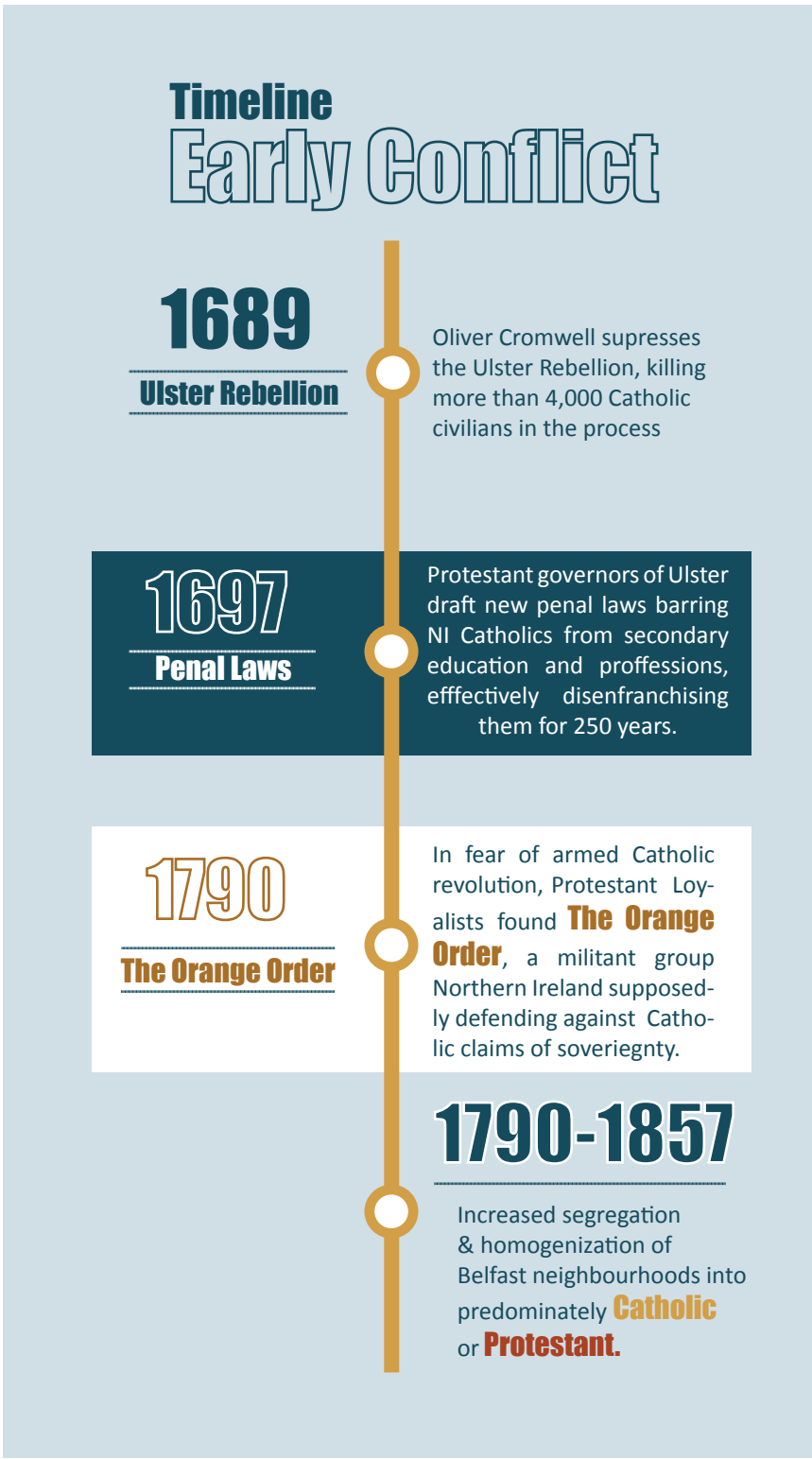


Figure 4.1
Timeline of the conflict. Made by author

Belfast Case Project Background

4.1 History of Belfast and the Northern Irland Conflict

Early Conflict - 1600 -1800

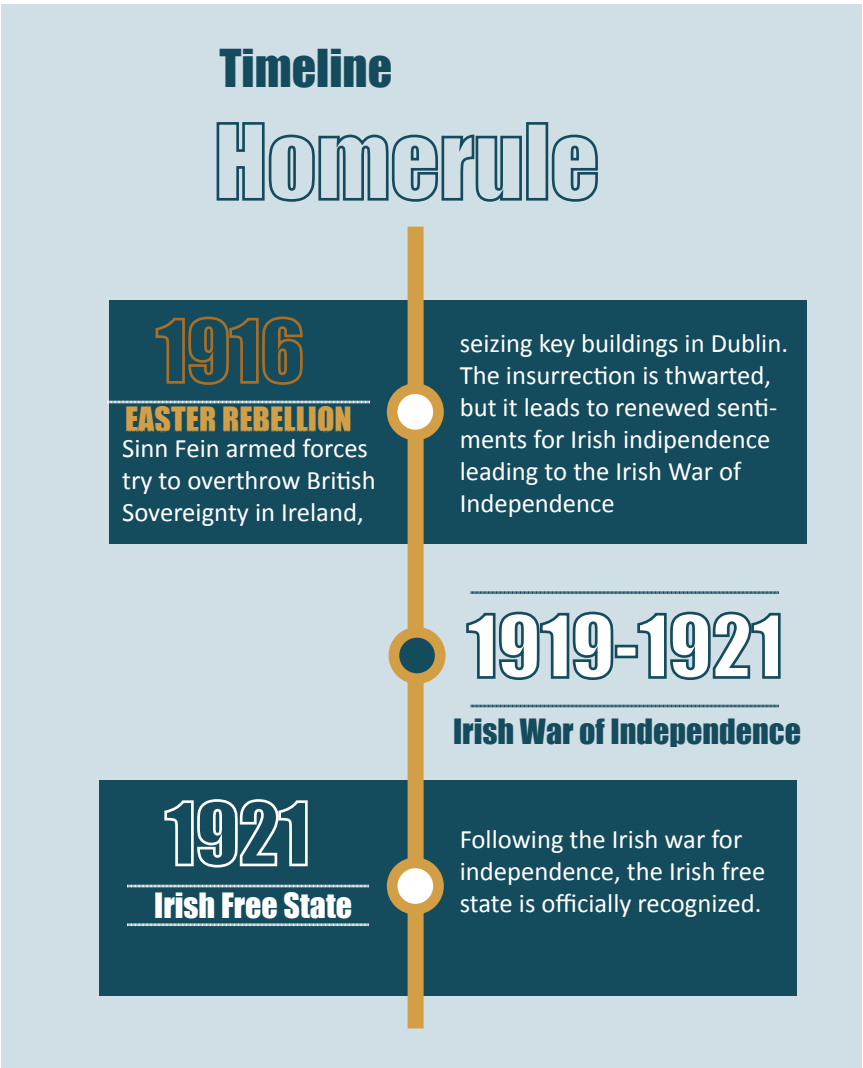
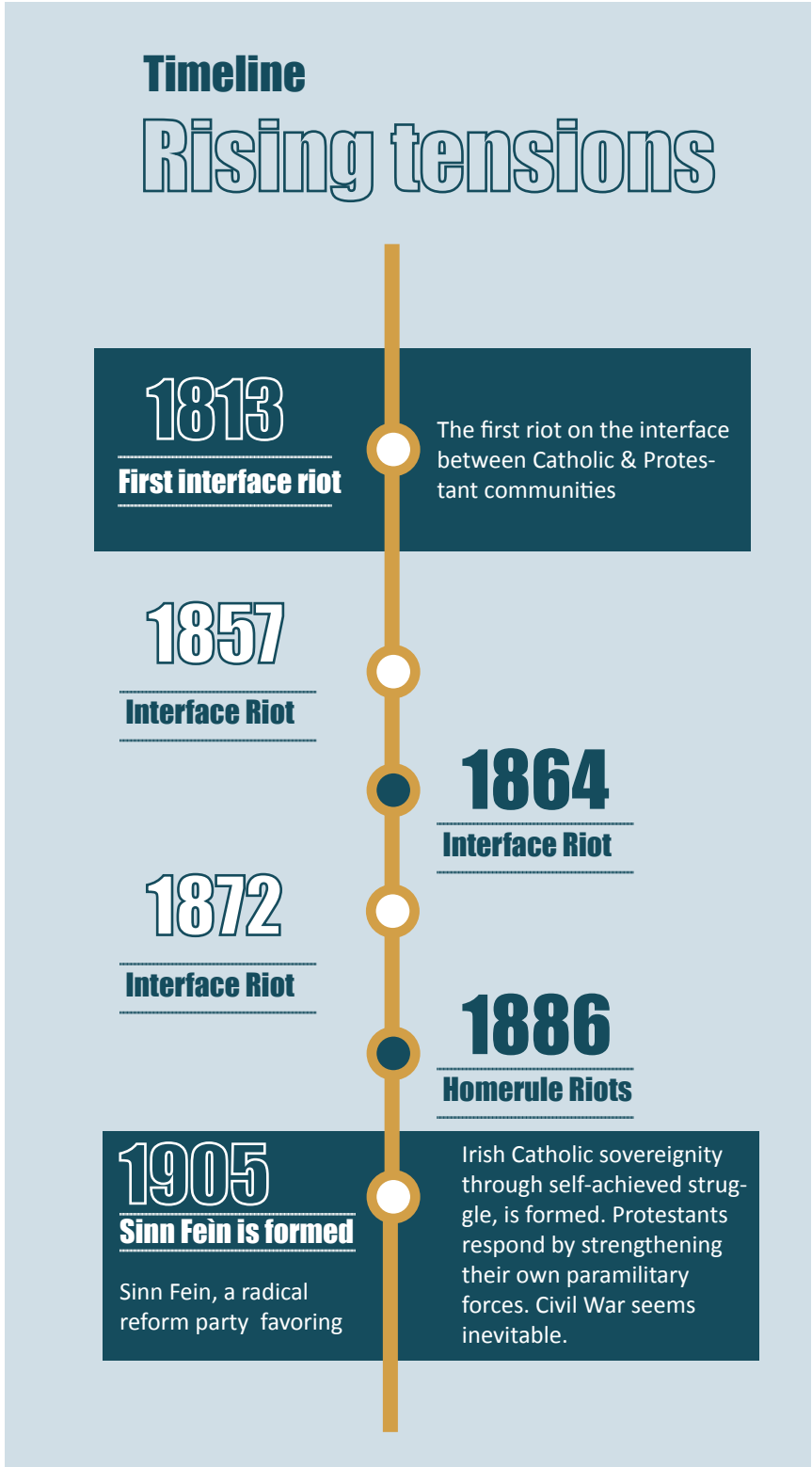
Similar to other divided cities the Protestant/Catholic conflict in Northern Ireland (NI) began centuries before the first physical partitions appeared. In the case of NI, the tensions between the two groups can be traced back to 1649 and the suppression of the Ulster Rebellion, an uprising against the English sovereignty by Catholic civilians. The conflict originated in a dispute regarding the right to land in one of the more fertile regions of Ireland where ownership to the land was granted to a group of Protestant landowners despite the fact that native Catholic farmers were already cultivating the land (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). The native landowners were forced from their land, threatened with reprisal should they return. After the Catholic farmers were forcibly relocated new landowners from England and Scotland, so called Ulster Scots, were given the right to resettle the land. This was a strategy to mark Ireland as politically British and culturally Protestant territory (Gallaher, 2007). The conflict also relates to the English civil war between the Catholic monarchy which favoured political absolutism, and the gentry which pushed towards Protestantism and restraints on monarchical powers. The English Civil War ended when Catholic James II was chased from the throne by the Dutch Protestant William of Orange and, after a series of battles between Catholic and Protestant supporters, was defeated in July 12th 1689 at the Battle of Boyne (Mulholland, 2002). This date holds a particular significance to the sectarian violence in Belfast, which will be expanded on later.

To stamp out Catholic influence in Ireland a series of penal laws which inhibited the Catholic church and stripped Catholics of many political and social rights (Mulholland, 2002). These events marked the beginning of a history of Protestant hegemony in Northern Ireland, and the aftermath of the rebellion and the civil war led to institutionalized discrimination against Catholics which would persist to the 20th century (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

The following century saw the rise of several militant groups within both the Catholic and Protestant communities, the most important probably being the formation of the Orange Order, a paramilitary Protestant fraternity which would hold an important role in maintaining the conflict in the centuries to come (Kinealy, 2000) While the conflict enveloped all parts of NI, the focal point of the paramilitary activities were in its urban areas like Belfast, where a pattern of ethnic segregation and homogenization had become an increasingly dominant force behind the city's demographic and urban development (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

Rising Tensions 1800-1900

There is an important point to be made of the correlation between the urbanization of rural sectarian violence into Belfast and the rapid urban growth and demographic shift in the city in the 19th century (Mulholland, 2002) Until the mid-19th century, Catholics accounted for less than 10% of the city's population. Up until this time, Belfast was not a region of particular economic success, having been one of the poorest provinces in Ireland in the 17th century. However, the industrialisation led to financial success for the city, much thanks to textile production and its role as an important export centre for the regions agricultural production (Kinealy, 2000). Favourable environmental conditions and human capital in the region also helped develop Belfast into a successful production centre for linen and shipbuilding. (Mulholland 2002). With financial success came urban immigration and rapid urban expansion, increasing the city's population from 37,000 in 1821 to 120 000 in



1861 and 350,000 by the end of the century. Coupled with the migration patterns of Irish Catholic rural population as a result of the 19th Century potato famine, the demographic of the city saw a rapid increase in Catholic population, from 9% by the beginning of the century to 34% by 1861 (Kinealy, 2000). In 1872 the demographics in Belfast mirrored that of Northern Ireland. Catholic population in Belfast was poorer but more numerous than Protestant (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

This rapid urban expansion and demographic shift led to increasing antagonisms between the two communities.(Kinealy, 2000) Another contributing factor to the escalating tensions was the revocation of most of the penal laws banning Catholics from holding political power were revoked. As a result, British politics saw an increased presence of Catholic influence. Cooperation between Catholic and Protestant parties led to a more liberal era in Irish politics, with many benefits favouring Catholic institutions.

These events led to the re-appearance and growth of the Protestant paramilitary Orange Order (Kinealy, 2000). It was originally founded in 1795, carrying out government and gentry backed terrorist campaigns against "disloyalists" (Mulholland, 2002). However, it had been abolished several decades prior to the revoking of the penal laws (Kinealy, 2000).The increasing growth of the Orange order occurred simultaneously as the Catholic population saw a rise in Irish nationalism. Escalating tensions culminated in riots and sectarian violence, which became a recurring element in Belfast throughout the 19th century. The first riot occurred in 1803, and between 1835 and 1935 Belfast saw eight periods of violent riots (Mulholland, 2002). This period also saw the emergence of the marching seasons. As the increasingly militant and organized Orange order was determined to show its strength upon its reconstitution, the group began to hold marches to celebrate anniversary of the Battle of Boyne (Kinealy. 2000). To this day, these marches remain the most serious periods of sectarian violence in Belfast (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

Home Rule & Irish Independence 1900-1920

Following the failed coup d'état of the Easter Rebellion in 1916, the 1918 election saw a surprising increase in support for Irish nationalism behind the Sinn Féin party. Refusing to cooperate or parley with the British political system Sinn Féin cut ties with Westminster and conveyed in Dublin where they formed the new parliament of the Irish Republic. (Mulholland 2002). In the following War of Independence Belfast became one of the focal points for resistance against British Sovereignty (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). In the end the struggle for independence proved successful as the British Government and Irish Republic agreed to an armistice with the Anglo-Irish treaty which would establish an autonomous Irish State. It seemed like the Irish Isles would finally achieve their long awaited independence. However, in the final negotiations for establishing an autonomous Irish Free State which were concluded with Government of Ireland act led to partition of the counties of Antrim, Down, Armagh, Fermanagh, Derry and Tyrone from the new Irish republic (see map 4.21). These counties instead be established as a new under British Rule, the state of Northern Ireland (Mullholland 2012). It's important to note that these six counties were not selected merely because of their common geographic location. Rather, they were carefully selected to compose an area where Prot-

Escalation 1920-1960

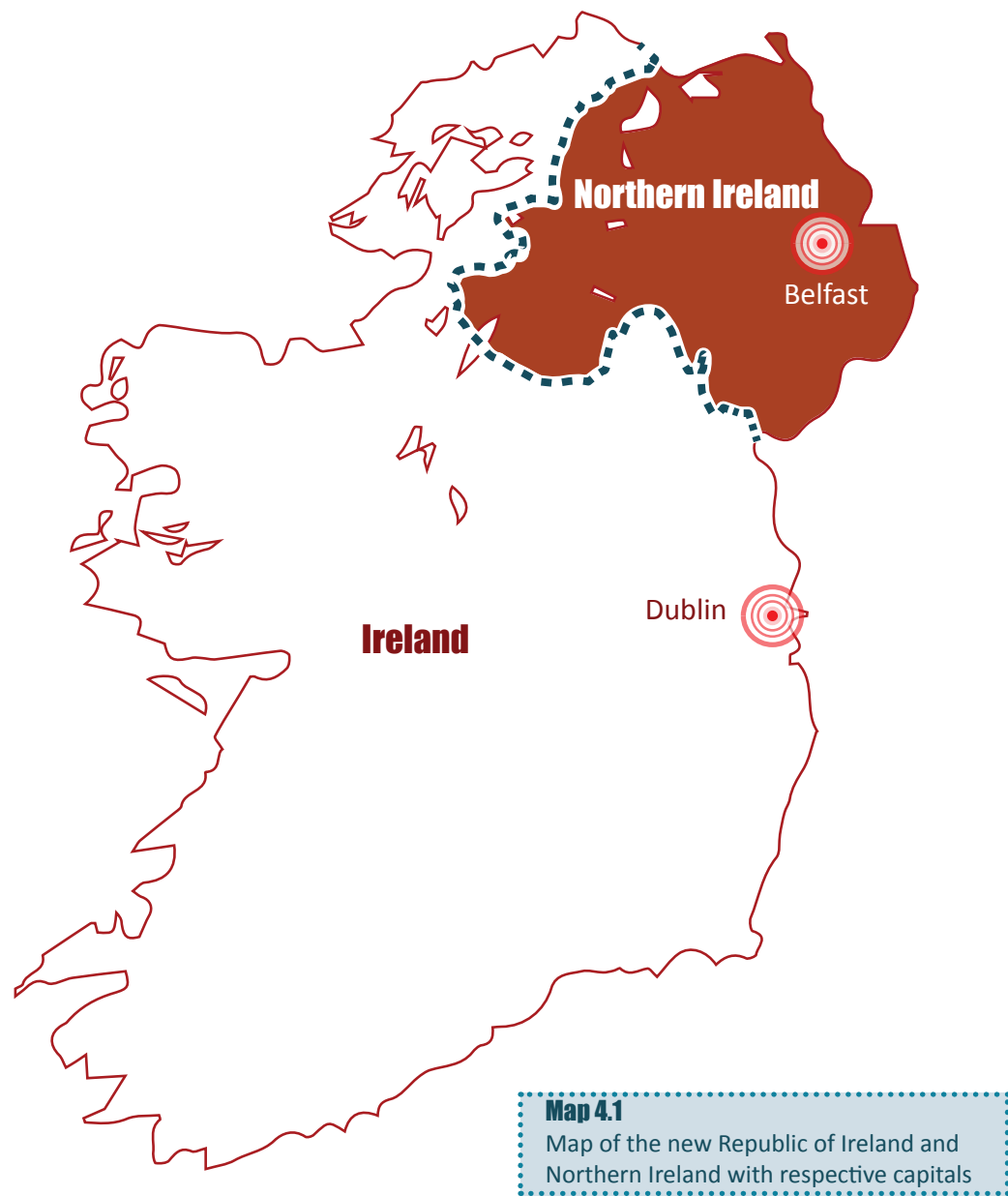
estant Unionists were in majority, thus ensuring majority support for UK sovereignty within Great Britain’s last stronghold in Ireland (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009; Mullholland 2002).

The isolation of Northern Ireland and a decreasing optimism for non-violent solutions led to escalations in sectarian violence with periods of intense inter-ethnic rioting in Belfast between 1920 and 1960, especially in the neighbourhoods of the working poor. In addition, urban planners were unequipped to meet the increasing migration to and densification of urban areas. Competition for both housing and jobs led to increased feelings of sectarian prejudice. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). Discrimination against Catholics in this era was widespread. In fear of Catholic infiltration to the upper levels of society, Catholics were limited in their financial, professional and political opportunities through both official and unofficial policies. (Mullholland, 2002). However, the time period leading up to the 1970’s saw a shift in political attitude towards the Catholic minority as the Northern Irish Government took a more progressive and liberal stance regarding Catholic discrimination (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). This liberal attitude towards Catholics was largely a tactic by Ulster Unionist leader Terrance O’Neill to break the sectarian nature of politics in Northern Ireland. In part this was the result of a strategy which aimed to gain the support of the rapidly increasing Catholic population, part of which would need to be ‘brought’ over if Unionist political parties were to survive the rapidly shifting Northern Irish demographics (Mullholland, 2002). Amongst some of the realized reforms was the 1947 Education Act re-established the rights to secondary education (i.e. University or equivalent) for Catholics. This reform would be an important factor in shaping the new generation of socially informed activists which would organize the civil rights’ movement, most notably Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) of the 1960’s and 1970’s, and the progressive attitude in general renewed hope for achieving Catholic goals through non-violent measures (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

Due to a combination of an economic downturn as the major industries in Belfast declined and political obstruction most of the promised reforms failed to reach realisation. Catholics were disgruntled by the failure of these reforms while Protestants regarded the attempts to satisfy Catholic demands as a betrayal on part of the Government. Consequently, both sides were ‘reinforcing means and mechanisms with which to confront their rivals’ while ‘demonstrating increasing scepticism of the governments’ capacity to intervene effectively’ (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 pp.70-71).

As the tensions rose between the groups throughout the 20th century, so did the territorial divisions, and in 1967 the territorial segregation of Catholics and Protestants in Belfast was ‘almost total’. In 1969 riots broke out along the interfaces of Belfast police responded with lethal force. Clashes between Catholic groups and Protestant Loyalist groups and between the two groups and the police escalated to the point where the police responded with lethal force, and admitted that they could ‘no longer guarantee the safety of regular citizens’. (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009 pp. 70-71).

This was the starting point of the period of intense sectarian violence and paramilitary conflict in Northern Ireland which would be known as ‘the Troubles’.



Picture 4.1 Mural commemorating the beginning of the Troubles

The Troubles 1969-1998

As riots and arson became an increasingly common occurrence along the interface areas both communities began to retreat from the interface areas into more homogenous enclaves. To prevent mob violence the first physical partitions were constructed at ‘key intersections’ in the form of informal physical barricades made out of ‘telegraph poles, hijacked bakery vans, municipal buses, up-turned cars, scaffolding and paving stones’ and guarded by both Protestant and Catholic residents. In April members of the Loyalist

Timeline Escalation

1947

Education Act Reform

The penal laws banning Catholics from secondary education are abolished, paving the way for a new more educated generation and the civil rights movement

1920-1970

Rapid densification & sectarian riots

Rapid densification with increased competition for jobs and housing led tensions increase and sectarian violence to erupt in Northern Ireland increases with several periods of inter-ethnic rioting in Belfast.

1960-1970

Rise of the civil rights movement

Over the course of the 60's the Civil Rights Movement is steadily growing in popularity, gaining more followers as promised reforms fail to materialise.

Timeline The Troubles

Aug. 12 1969

Interface Riots

Violence erupts during a protestant fraternal parade in Derry. By the 13th the riot has erupted into full blown sectarian conflict.

Aug. 15 1969

Belfast RUC admits loss of control

1969 - 1998

The Troubles

During the Troubles, partitions are erected and bombings, shootings and paramilitary conflict is a part of everyday life in Belfast

Sept. 9th 1969

First peaceline constructed

1998

Good Friday Agreement

The Good Friday Agreement is signed, marking the official end of the Troubles, but not the conflict.

Paramilitary organisations of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Ulster Protestant Volunteers (UPV) performed a series of bombings which targeted infrastructural resources such as an electrical substation, water pipelines and reservoirs. These bombings were a strategy by Protestant Loyalist to be blamed on the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in order to ‘destabilise Terrence O’Neill’ and bring an end to the progressive pro-catholic reforms (Melaugh, 2012).

On August 12th, 1969 as a parade by the Apprentice Boys, a protestant fraternal organization, passed close to the Catholic area of Bogside in Derry serious rioting erupted, leading to the intervention by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) followed and supported by crowds of Loyalists. The following day the riots had spread across Catholic areas all over Northern Ireland. By the end of August 13th the rioting had escalated into full blown sectarian conflict forcing many residents of interface areas out of their homes. As violence escalated the police admitted they were no longer able to control the situation in Belfast, and on August 14th after two days of the task of curbing the violence and stabilising the city was turned over to the British Army which deployed troops on the streets of Belfast and Northern Ireland (Melaugh, 2012). The British forces in Belfast soon realized the disadvantage of waging urban warfare against Catholic and Protestant paramilitary forces who were way more familiar with the terrain and in response added their own partitions to the myriad of informal partitions already constructed by Belfast residents (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). On September 9th 1969 the first ‘peace-line’ was constructed on the interface of Chichester-Clark (Melaugh, 2012). This pattern of fortification on part of both the residents and the official government led to increasingly fortified enclaves separated by a ‘no-man’s land’ defended by and monitored by the army. Many of these physical partitions and remains as ‘peace-walls’ and the no-man’s land as empty and areas all over Belfast today. The conflict itself persisted for nearly 30 years until it ended officially with the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). However, sporadic episodes of sectarian violence have continued until the present day and paramilitary assassinations and bombings occurred as late as 2002 (Melaugh, 2012). Over the course of the Troubles sectarian conflict had resulted in 3600 violent deaths, 1220 of which were Belfast residents, predominantly of North and West Belfast. 13.000 Belfast residents were directly affected by sectarian violence and thousands were forced to flee their homes (as early as 1975 over 9000 homes were irreparably damaged or bricked up). Indirect consequences on Belfast residents include post-traumatic stress disorder and survivors guilt, and the most affected communities are those of in working-class neighbourhoods of North and West Belfast (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009).

Conclusion

This section has tried to illuminate background to the long history of division and conflict between Protestant and Catholic community in Northern Ireland and Belfast by sample some of the events leading up to it. It shows us how demographic patterns have shifted from the Catholic being a clear minority to becoming a majority. But perhaps most importantly it shows us how the conflict throughout history has been shaped by the process of urbanisation while similarly being instrumental in shaping the urban environment of contemporary Belfast. This being the case, perhaps the process of building peaceful relations around urban development can be an equally important instrument in shaping the future of Belfast.

Belfast Case Project Context

4.2 The Interfaces today

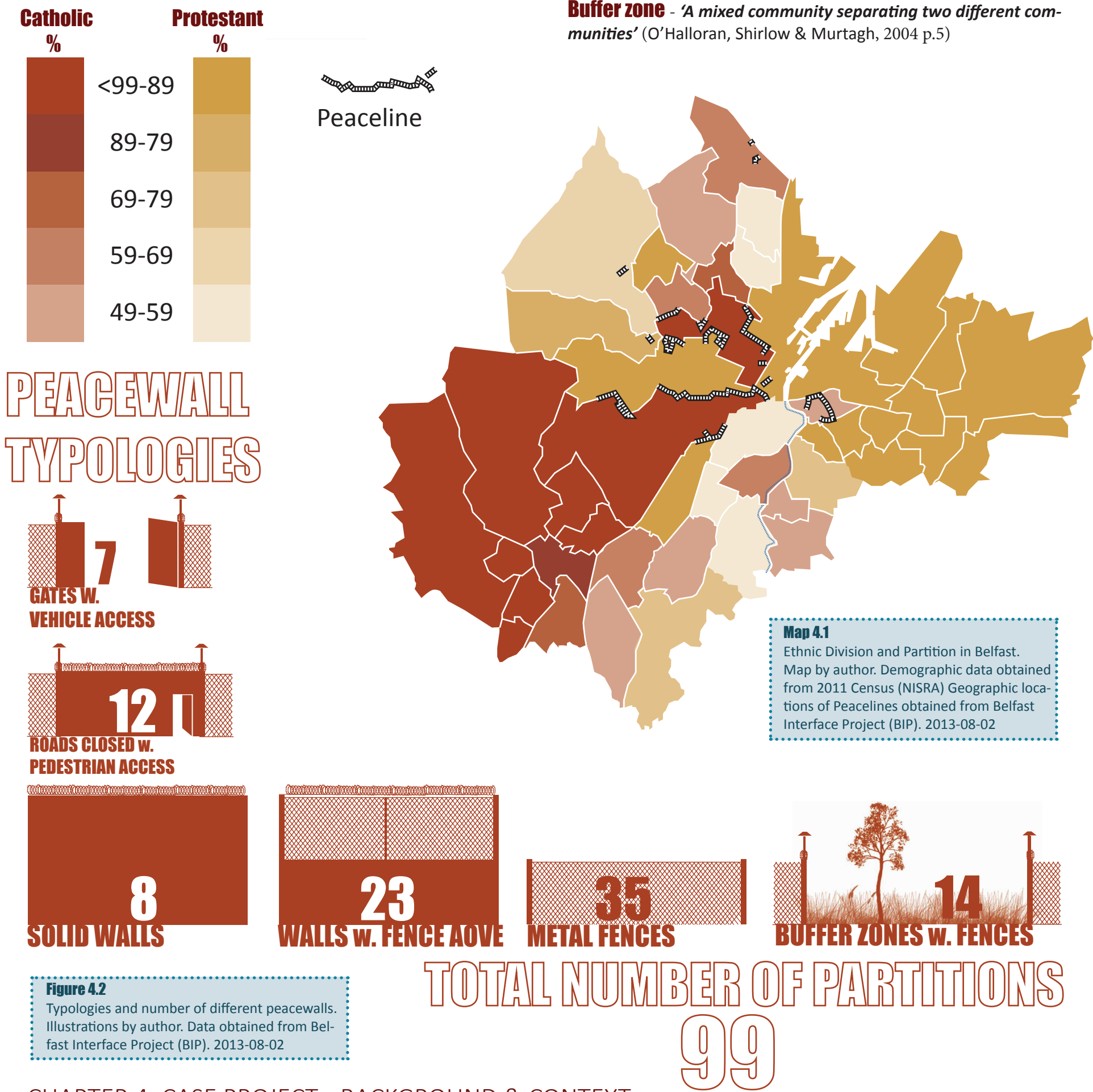
Following the Good Friday Agreement, Belfast is a much calmer place than in the 1990's. However, as recent riots proves, there is no denying that spatial and ethnical division still is a strong issue in the city (BBC News, 2009). The south and west is predominately Catholic while the demographic of the east mainly consists of a Protestant population. Several 'Peace-walls' still cut across interface areas between Catholic and Protestant communities. These partitions are present all over the city, but are most prevalent in the working-class neighbourhoods of North Belfast, where majority catholic and protestant neighbourhoods live in what can be described as a 'patchwork' of Protestant and Catholic enclaves. These barriers vary in size, appearance and functions. Some provide access for vehicle and pedestrian traffic (picture 4.2),

some are benign in their appearance and allow for visual permeability (picture 4.3), while other are more similar to military artefacts (picture 4.4) completely dividing the urban environment.

However, the peace lines only attribute to parts of the problem with social exclusion and partition. Researchers define problematic interface areas beyond the walls themselves, including all areas where segregated and polarised working class residential zones intersect in areas with a "strong link between territory and ethno-political identity" (Jarman, 2004, p. 5). The Belfast Interface project recognizes three types of interfaces. They are:

- Enclave** - "an 'island' community totally surrounded by 'other' communities"
- Split** - "A wall or boundary evenly separating the two communities"
- Buffer zone** - "A mixed community separating two different communities" (O'Halloran, Shirlow & Murtagh, 2004 p.5)

Ethnic Division and Partition in Belfast today

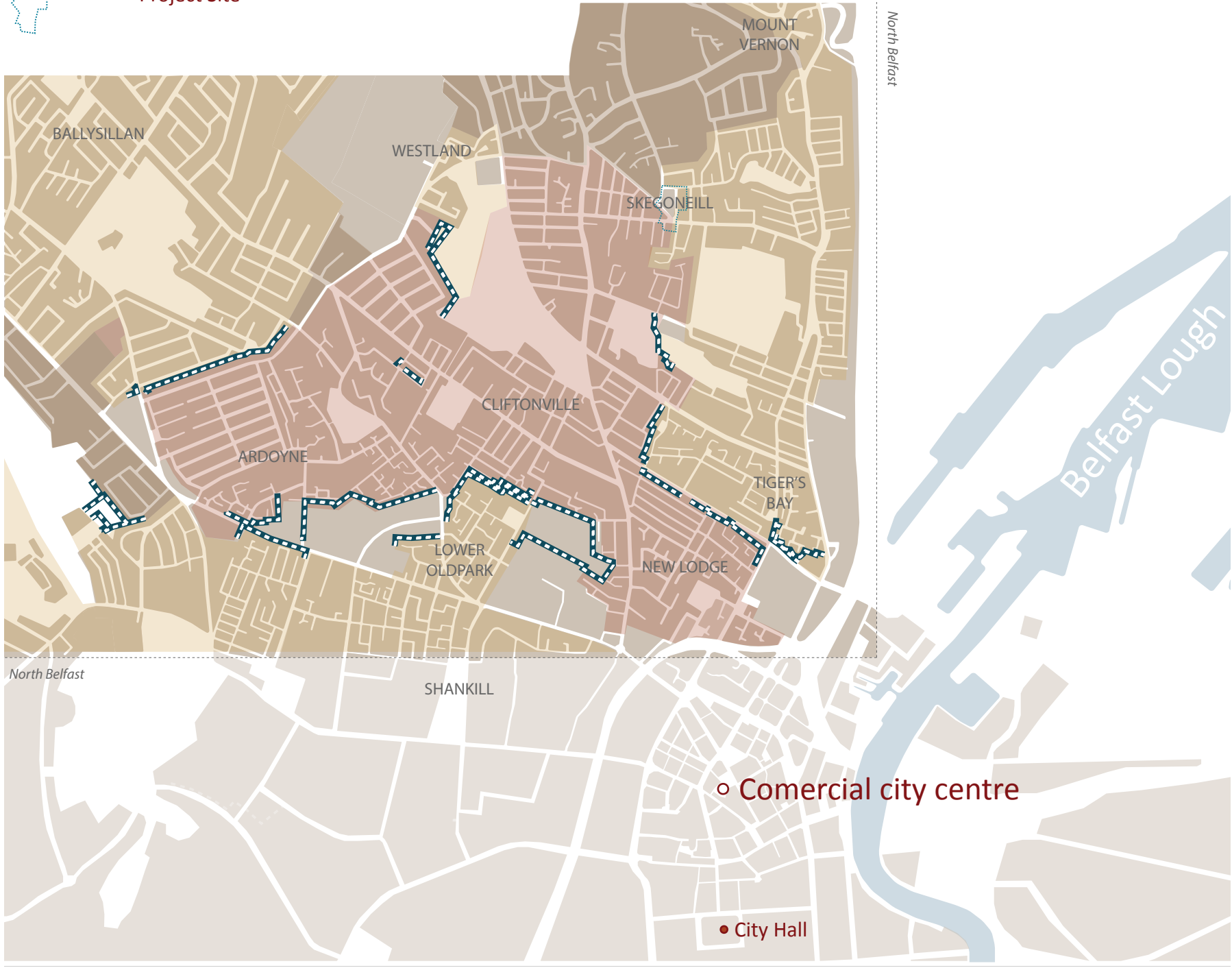


Picture 4.2 (right), 4.3 (left) & 4.4 (above) Photographs of interface walls in North Belfast. Photos by Author

Legend

- Peaceline & wall
- Protestant Territory
- Catholic Territory
- Mixed or Neutral Territory
- Project Site

Map 4.2
Map of interfaces and relation to place names and areas of dereliction and blighted land in North Belfast. Original Map by Chris Karelse, Queens University of Belfast 2013. Map edited digitally by Author. Used with permission.



The Interfaces today - North Belfast

North Belfast contains several examples of all of the aforementioned types of interfaces. Approximately half of Belfast’s interfaces can be found here (Belfast Interface Project, 2013). Apart from the peace walls themselves, large areas of land function as buffer zones between protestant and catholic neighbourhoods. The formal function of the buffer zones differs. Many buffer zones consist of derelict land, employment centres or industrial areas and similar ‘neutral’ non-public spaces. Many are either the result of ‘cultivation’ by neighbourhoods, failed development due to lack of funding or just abandoned spaces, ‘cavities in the city’s built fabric...unfit for investment (Morrow et al. 2011 p. 60). In some places neutral space and homes for the elderly have been deliberately planned between Protestant and Catholic neighbourhoods as informal buffer zones.¹ Urban redevelopment schemes in the area have also reinforced the division. New housing and street develop-

ments on either sides of the interfaces are often constructed with the frontage facing away from the interface forming a ‘deliberate dead-end and looped-back street structure according to Morrow et al. has ‘resulted not only in a condition where the physical and social interconnections of the city can only be reinstated with the greatest of difficulty, but also in a state of mind’ (Morrow et al. 2011 p.60). Altogether the effect on the city is that not only will the mental segregation of catholic and protestant urban communities will remain even if the peace walls were to come down, in most areas the physical division would remain as well.¹

When addressing the division in Belfast it is therefore useful to expand the notion of sectarian barriers beyond the more obvious elements into a broadened perspective which encompasses all different types of interfaces.

¹ Notes from guided walk in North Belfast with Chris Karelse and Ovgu Pelen Karelse, 2013-03-14



Picture 4.5 (top) 4.6 (left), 4.7 (right) Photographs of interface walls in North Belfast. the Shankill interface and industrial buffer zone- Shankill Ward (4.5), Tigers bay - New Lodge Ward (4.6) and a Cul-de-sac in Tigers Bay (4.7)

Why work with the interfaces?

Researchers have emphasized that there are significant economic costs economic costs in maintaining the current segregation and interfaces (Bradley & Murtagh, 2007). Typically interface communities perceive that there is a lack of knowledge of the other community, but a desire for a better relationship with the other community and actual information of concerning how the other community perceives them (Belfast Interface Project, 1998). There are thus both economic and social incentives for regenerating these areas. Additionally, revitalizing the urban space at the interfaces may also benefit the peace process. As the Belfast Interface Project notes, the interface is where the communities intersect, and stability of these areas serve as ‘a “barometer” of the health of the peace

process’. By addressing the interface issue, intentions of reconciliation are signalled. This could ‘restore faith that the process can produce real results’ through showing that the results of the peace process can ‘have a real impact “on the ground” between communities’ (Belfast Interface Project, 1998 p.10). While one should not assume that the complex issues of the conflict in Belfast can be solved merely by the process of planning and development of urban space, shaping these urban spaces holds the possibility for creating ‘spaces of opportunity’ (Shirlow & Murtagh, 2006 p. 145). Engaging with the interfaces could help to establish a positive vision for post-conflict space, something which is direly needed in many the interface communities (Goldie & Ruddy, 2010).

4.3 Interface characteristics & common issues

Dereliction and abandoned space

While the commercial centre in Belfast has undergone extensive regeneration and is still the focus of attention for urban development schemes, many of the peripheral areas still face an everyday landscape dominated by abandoned areas characterized by dereliction and deprived land (for examples & picture 4.8-4.10).

As such, despite much investment in reconstruction of Belfast dereliction of the urban environment remains a common element in many parts of Belfast, especially at the areas surrounding the interfaces of North Belfast see (map 4.3). This part of the city contains 70% of Belfast’s derelict space (see figure 4.3) and 44% of its urban voids. (see figure 4.4) This deprecation and urban voids impacts issues of safety as they singles out the interfaces as distinct areas. This is a problem to any attempts for reconciliation and peace in the area since these urban voids and depraved areas ‘positively accommodates those looking for fights or “anti-social behaviour”’(Goldie & Ruddy, 2010 p. 30)

Many of these areas have remained in their current state for decades, and have become the everyday environment for the people living in these neighbourhoods. This degraded state of the environment is prevalent in both Catholic Unionist and Protestant Loyalist neighbourhoods. As a consequence many inhabitants of these areas have seen few benefits from the regeneration during the ‘peaceful division’ of Belfast.¹ Many residents of North Belfast thus remain disillusioned with the possibility for remediation of their everyday environment (Morrow et al., 2011, Goldie & Ruddy, 2010). In conclusion, not only does this dereliction serves as a reminder of the conflict, but for many residents it may also symbolise the inability by local authorities to address long term issues which have an impact on everyday life and environment of many Belfast residents. This may contribute to a feeling of marginalization in the people of North Belfast.

1 This opinion was also shared by a community representative present at one of the student workshop in North belfast which i was allowed to partake in during my visit. 2013-03-14



Picture 4.8 Urban void in the vicinity of the Alexandra Park interface.



Picture 4.9 Abandoned and derelict house by the entrance to Alexandra Park



Picture 4.10 Rubble at an urban void buffer zone in North Belfast.

Map 4.3 Abandoned and neutral space in North Belfast. Original Map by Chris Karelse, Queens University of Belfast 2013. Map edited digitally by Author. Used with permission.



Derelict space

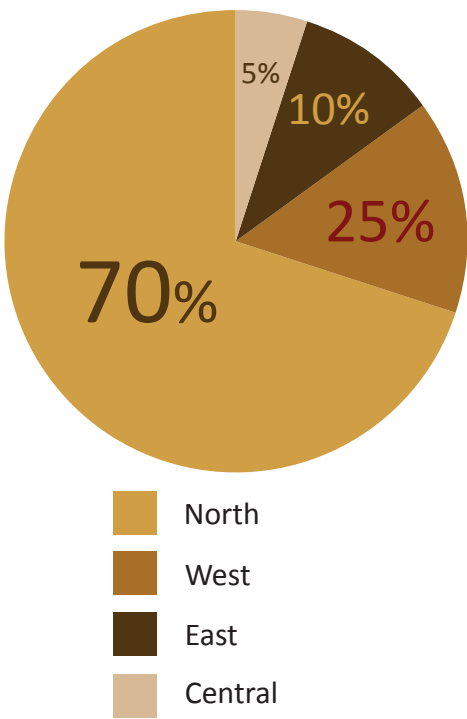


Figure 4.3 Derelict space in Belfast. Data obtained from BIP 2013-11-05. Calculations & illustrations by author.

Urban Voids

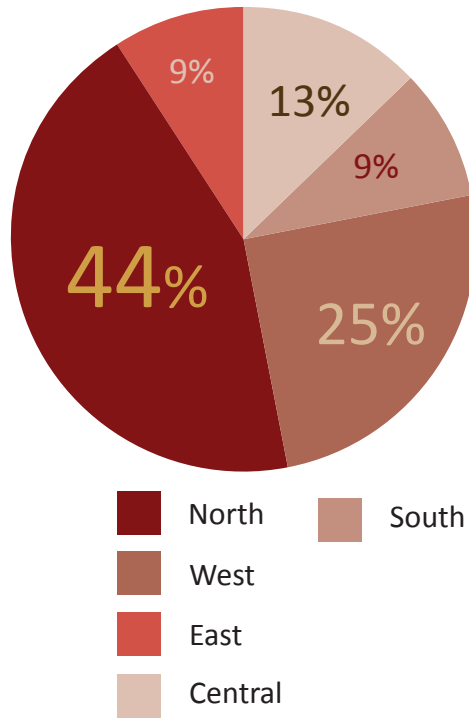
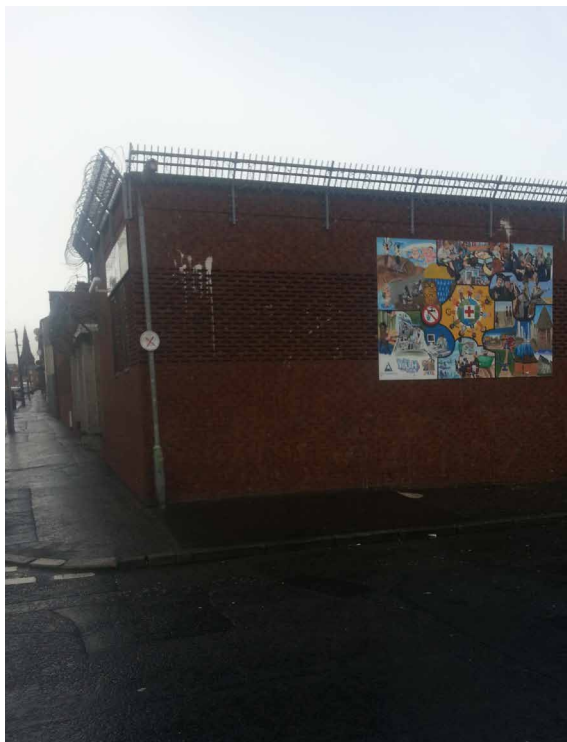


Figure 4.4 Urban voids in Belfast. Data obtained from BIP 2013-11-05. Calculations & illustrations by author.

Defensive arhitecture & militarized urban space

In addition to derelict space and the fortified peace walls, militarized architecture’ is a common sight in Belfast. In North Belfast in particular barbed wire, CCTV cameras very high fences and similar “defensive architecture” are encountered regularly. For an outsider it is especially noticeable in the threatening character of the youth centres (picture 4.11) and playgrounds (picture 4.12) contrasting the traditionally ‘innocent’ image of such places. ¹ Investigations have shown that youth and children are both deeply affected by the conflict, while they simultaneously often hold a key role in instigating inter-communal violence (Goldie & Ruddy, 2010). Providing youth with access to an environment which transcends the conflict narrative may thus be a key issue for the peace process. The question is how this can be achieved when every aspect of their everyday environment, even their spaces of play, are permeated by the conflict narrative.

1 Notes from walk through North Belfast, 2013-03-14



Picture 4.11 Youth centre in New Lodge, North Belfast



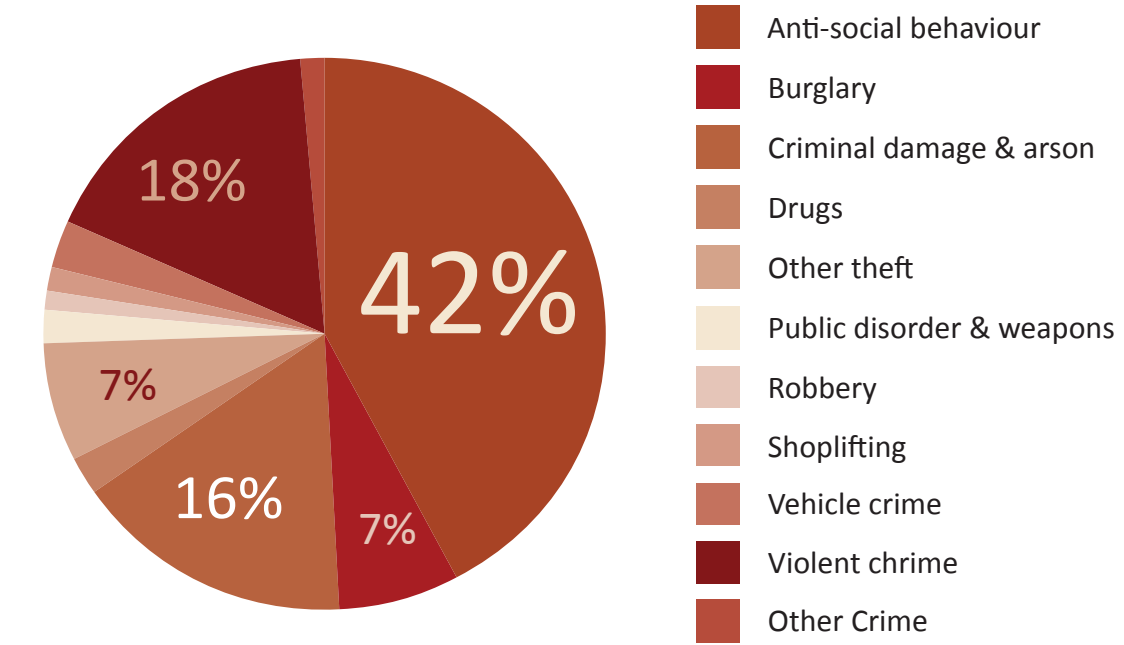
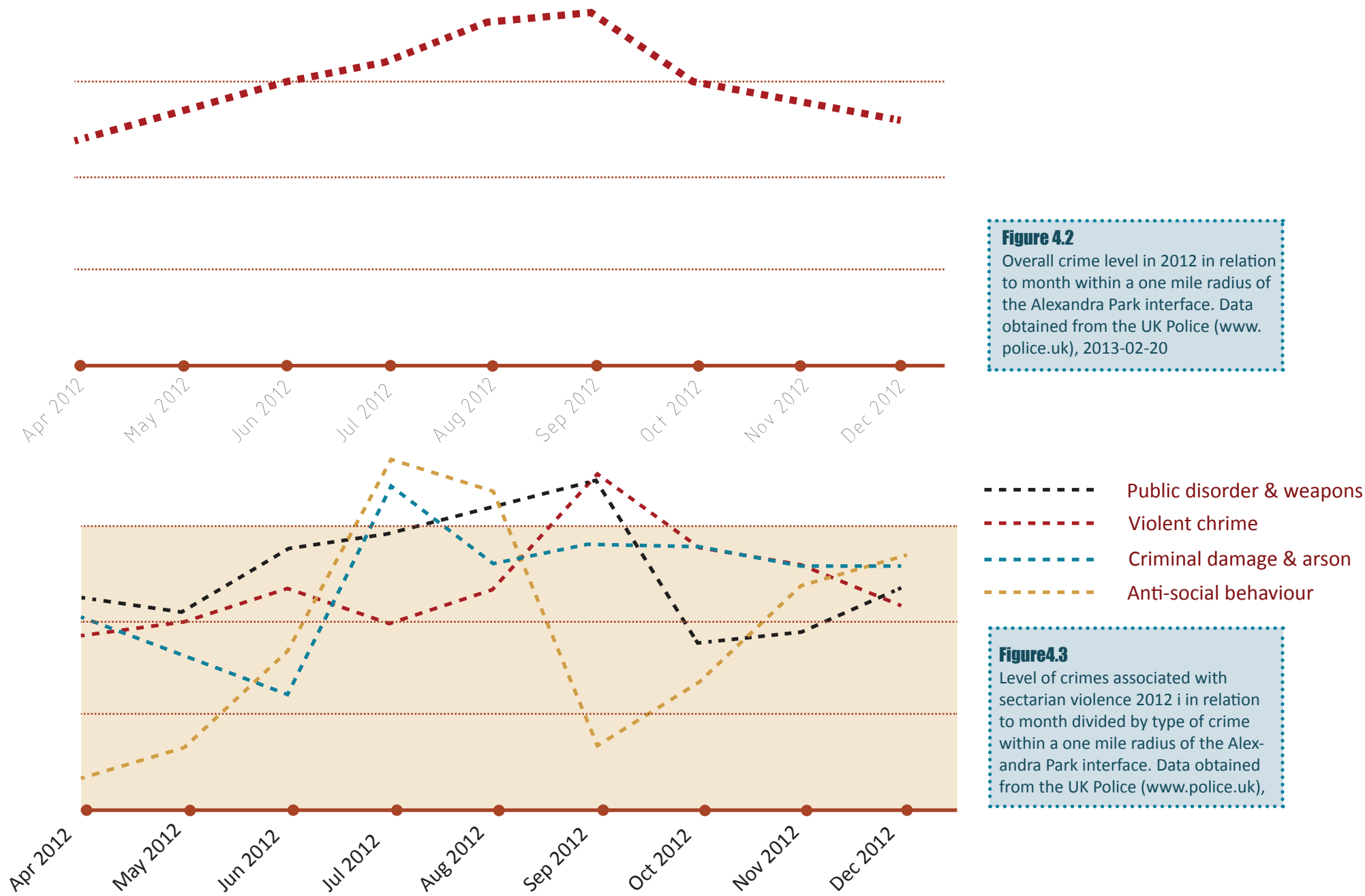
Picture 4.12 Playground in Duncairn, North Belfast

Crime & seasonal instability

Working-class Belfast ranks highest when it comes to sectarian violence. Violent crime tends to be highest in frequency in interface areas, which results in ‘lasting feelings of anxiety, insecurity and resentment’ in these areas. Spikes in violence in the Belfast area has been proven to have a strong correlation with the calendar, in particular with the dates associated with the marches of various Protestant fraternal organizations. Peaks in violence Belfast in general during the period 1969-1998 typically occurred in late summer. One Belfast citizen emphasized the date of the 12th of July, the date for the marches of the Orange Orders to celebrate the Battle of Boyne (Calame & Charlesworth, 2009). These marches and similar celebrations affiliated patterns of calendar based in-

ter-communal violence have been a regular occurrence since the mid-19th century (Kinealy, 2000) While the most intense periods occur around the July 12th marches, some marches begin as early as April. ¹ Data gathered from the Northern Ireland Police force mapping crime levels between April 2012-December 2012 reveals a pattern in an area within a 1 mile radius of the Waterworks park with anti-social behaviour and public disorder steadily increasing from April onwards, and peaking in July, and with arson and violent crime peaking in September (see figure 4.2 & 4.3). This affects any attempt to create new public spaces at the interface as the probability for arson and criminal damage is high.

1 This fact was told to me by a Belfast resident, 2013-03-14



Analysis of overall levels of crime in the area reveals a high prevalence of crimes associated with sectarian disturbances such as violent crime, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and arson constitute approximately 72% of (reported) crime in the area (see figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4
Pie chart revealing relationships between different types of crime in the area over the period Apr-Dec 2010 within a one mile radius of the Alexandra Park interface. Data obtained from the UK Police (www.police.uk), 2013-02-20

Divided Infrastructure

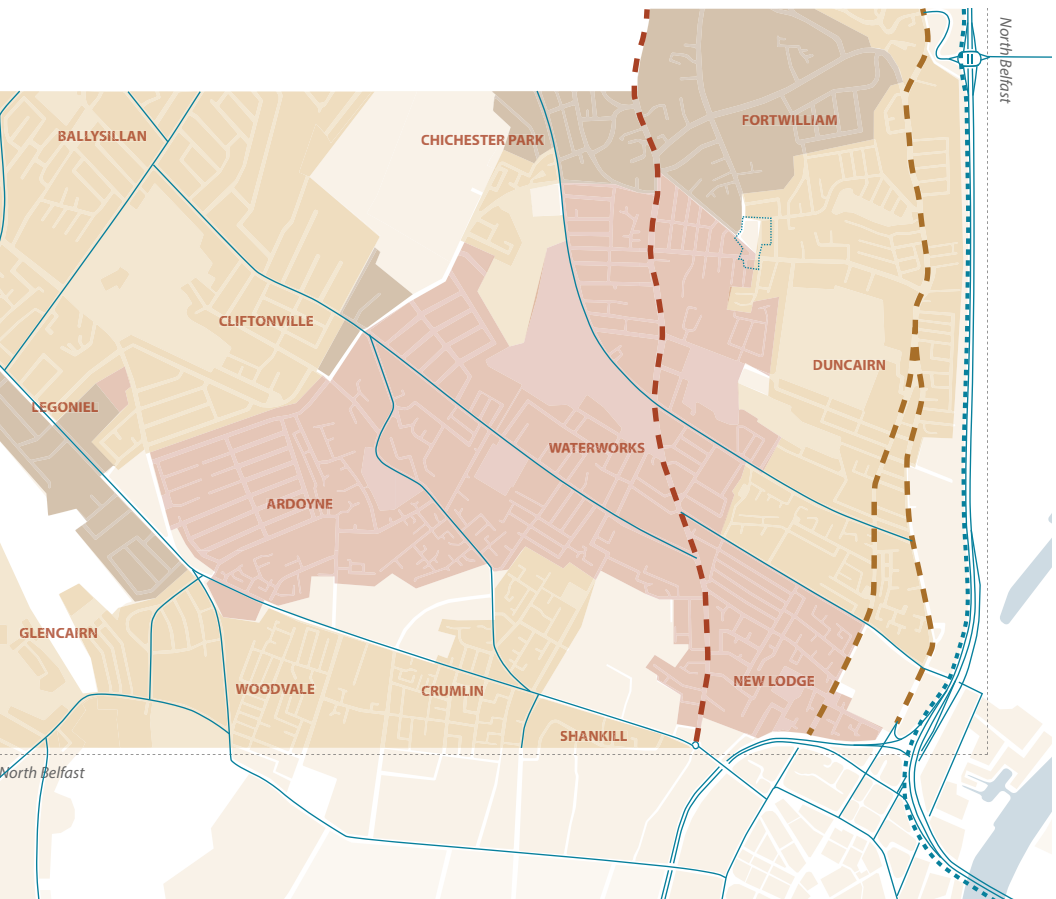
The infrastructure of Belfast reflects the division of the city. The inner city area in North Belfast has become ‘physically isolated’ from the city centre by major roads (see map 4.5), which ‘provides good circulation for outside motorists, but little practical benefit for local communities’ (Gaffikin et al. 2008 p.9). They are in effect what Lynch (1968) described as a barrier. Walking or cycling is thus very limited. This symbolise the other sort of division in the city - the division between the outer city areas and the commercial city centre. One must note that car ownership is relatively uncommon (Gaffikin et al. 2008). On average barely 50% has access to a car in the project area in the North Belfast focus area. (see figure 4.5) However, no access to a car in some wards in North Belfast can be as high as 35% (Gaffikin et al. 2008).

As such most residents in the region rely on public transport in the form of busses. Connectivity to public spaces and ‘the shared spaces of the city centre’ thus rely heavily on public transport, which still runs the same routes since its inception during ‘The Troubles’, and as such are virtually reflecting the division in Belfast (Gaffikin et al. 2008). For example in North Belfast, Metrobus 1 runs through Catholic areas, while Metrobus 2 runs through mainly Protestant areas (see Map 4.4). This divided infrastructure makes the public spaces in North Belfast even more important as they are the only spaces of recreation and possible cross-community interaction easily available in the everyday environment for a large portion of the population.



Legend

- Protestant neighbourhood busstop
- Catholic neighbourhood busstop
- Mixed neighbourhood busstop
- Metrobus 1
- Metrobus 2
- Metrobus 61
- Project Site



Legend

- Catholic arterial route
- Protestant arterial route
- General arterial route
- Barrier - Highway
- Protestant Neighbourhood
- Catholic Neighbourhood
- Neutral Neighbourhood
- Project Site

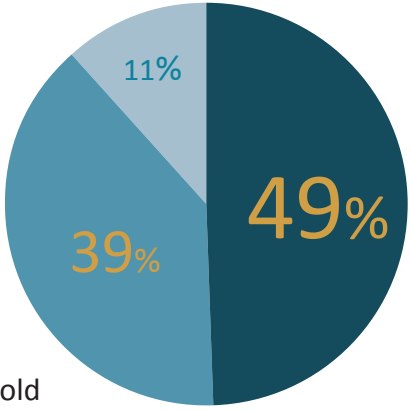


Figure 4.5
Car access in North Belfast Focus Area. Calculation and illustration by author. Data obtained from 2011 Census (NISRA, 2011) 2013-11-05

Map 4.4

Bus routes in North Belfast. Original Map by Chris Karelse, Queens University of Belfast 2013. Map digitally edited by Linus Fredriksson. Used with permission.

Map 4.5

Arterial routes in North Belfast. Original Map by Chris Karelse, Queens University of Belfast 2013. Map digitally edited by Author. Used with permission.

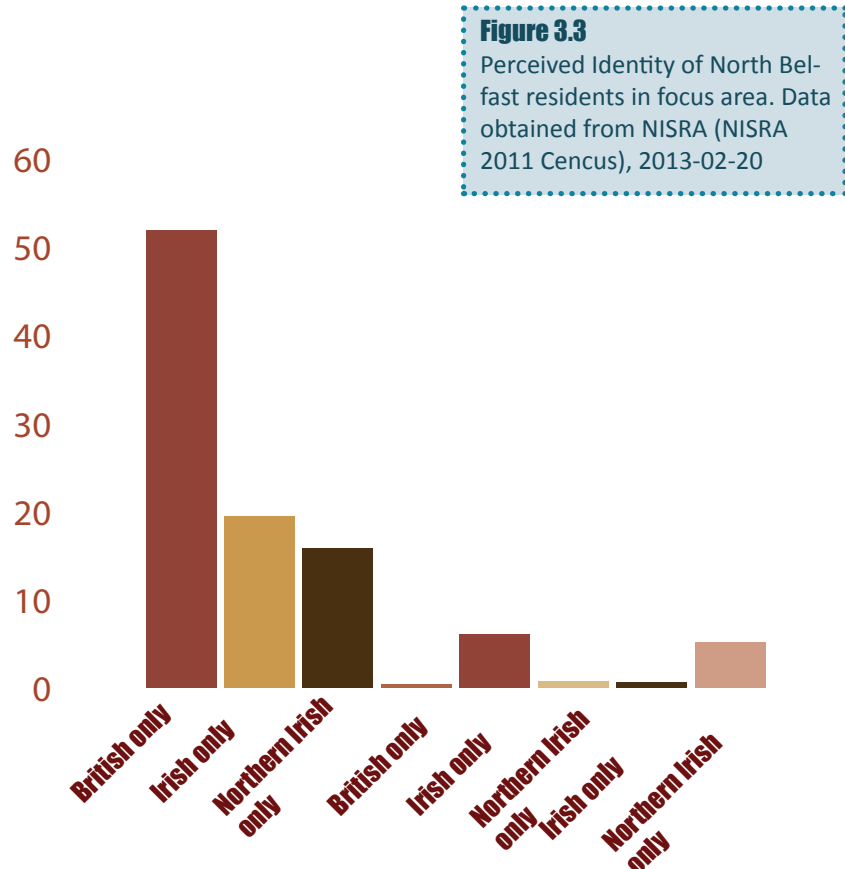
Territorial Identity: Sectarian markings

As I described in chapter 2 and 3, territoriality, identity and its connection to space is a major factor in divided cities. Belfast is no exception from this rule. By the 2011 census only a majority of the population of the North Belfast focus area considered themselves to be either British only or Irish only rather than Northern Irish (see figure 3.3). There is a deep rooted sense of ownership which relates to this perceived identity (Belfast Interface Project, 1998).

Sectarian markers such as sectarian graffiti (picture 4.13), murals (picture 4.14) and flags (picture 4.15 & 4.16) are a common physical expression of this territorial identity throughout Belfast. They vary in their degree of ‘aggressiveness’, from murals depicting sports heroes to memorials and tribal murals celebrating paramilitary organizations, they all represent territorial claims to some extent.¹

A challenge facing the public realm in North Belfast - particularly to regeneration along the borderland landscape between Catholic and Protestant areas - is the ‘de-sectarianization’ of the environment (Gaffikin, 2010 p.510). Removing these tribal markings, flags and similar sectarian symbols and minimizing the visual evidence of and opportunities for territorial claims is a key issue in order to establish common ground and inclusive spaces. It is only when this is done that residents can begin to positively identify these sites as ‘shared space’ (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). This responsibility cannot be expected of the property-owner as part of the problem is that many of the larger paramilitary murals and memorials are forcibly maintained under the threat of violence, even though residents might not necessarily want them kept on their walls.¹

1 Notes from guided walk in North Belfast with Chris Karelse and Ovgu Pelen Karelse, 2013-03-14



Picture 4.13 (above) & 4.14 Negative territorial sectarian graffiti (4.13) and Protestant Loyalist mural (4.14) in East Belfast



Picture 4.15 (above) Union Jack on lampposts marking protestant territory



Picture 4.16 Dereliction and protestant territorial markers

4.4 Public Space in Belfast

According to Frank Gaffikin, public space in Belfast can be divided into four different categories.¹

Ethnic space is space which is dominated by segregation. This type of space is rarely used by members of both communities, and is a common type of public space in North Belfast (for example picture 4.17). A scarcity of public space resources coupled with the fact that there are not many private open spaces, such as private gardens, in working class neighbourhoods means that the few public spaces that exist are a very precious and important spatial asset to the respective communities. This means that there will be a form of ‘site ownership’ by different communities over these spaces. For instance Grove Fields is a large football field which is in theory open to everyone. But because it is in and primarily accessed by going through Protestant territory, Catholic children don’t really get to use it. ‘Spatial resources’, Gaffikin claims, ‘are in this case partisan resources’¹. One of the largest threats against public space and green space development for a post-conflict North Belfast is this type of territorial marking and claimed ownership.¹



Picture 4.17 Ethnic space in North Belfast

Shared space is space in which both communities engage actively seek each other out which they deliberately and proactively visit for the opportunity for engagement with the other community. For instance community gardens in North Belfast. These spaces differ from cosmopolitan spaces and neutral in that they exist for the specific purpose of facilitating not only contact but also engagement between both communities.¹One instance of these spaces in North Belfast could be the cross-community urban gardens developed by Groundwork (picture 4.19).²



Picture 4.19 Shared space in North Belfast

¹ Frank Gaffikin, Interview, 2013-03-14

Neutral space may be used by both communities, take for instance the redeveloped Belfast waterfront (picture 4.18). However, this space is not space in which the two communities seek each other out and interact; rather it is space which happens to be used by both communities, but just coincidentally. These spaces may not be particularly contested or claimed by any specific group, but neither do they encourage the communities in engage in contact. Examples in Belfast include much of the city centre and the regenerated waterfront.¹



4.18 Neutral space at the regenerated waterfront in Belfast

Cosmopolitan space Cosmopolitan space embraces cosmopolitan ideological values of pluralism and. It is considered to be ‘international’ space, which ‘transcends the conflict narrative’.¹ Today this type of space is present in the ‘new spaces’ of Belfast, such as the Titanic Quarter (picture 4.20) (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011). In Belfast it is very rare. This type of space is useful because it transcends the conflict narrative and younger population in particular relates to these places. They don’t have the memory of the conflict and hence tend to read the city in a different matter. Their mental map of the city is different and identifies more with this contemporary narrative of the city rather than old one shaped by conflict. ¹ It holds value for people wanting to escape the conflict, presenting an opportunity for Belfast to rebrand itself, however it is rarely the result of limited input in the form of public participation implicates ‘market-based development over needs-based development’ (Gaffikin & Morrissey, 2011 p.264).



Picture 4.20 Cosmopolitan space in the Titanic Quarter



Picture 4.21 Waterworks reservoir



Picture 4.22 Entrance to Alexandra Park



Picture 4.23 View of Cave Hill from Waterworks Park

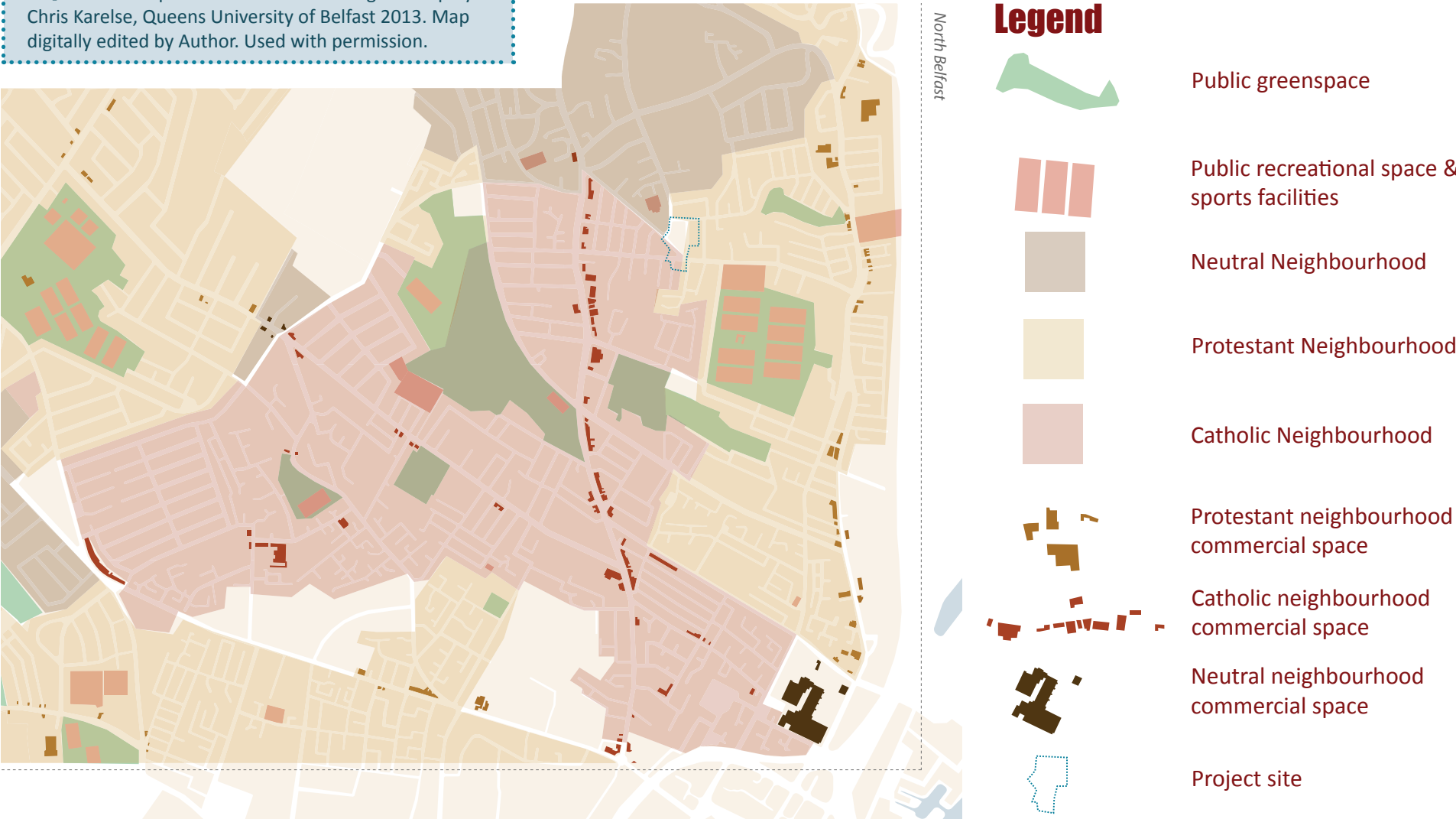
4.5 Public space in North Belfast

Commercial Public Space in North Belfast, while accessible to all in theory, in practice only caters to either of the two communities. Most of the commercial public space with shops and similar facilities are clustered along Catholic or Protestant arterial routes (see map 4.6). Many of these arterial routes are marked by territorial markings, further distinguishing them as ethnic spaces (Gaffikin, 2010).

Green spaces in North Belfast, both private and public, are scarce. Alexandra Park (picture 4.22) and Waterworks Park (picture 4.21) constitute two of the few instances of rare public greenspace in inner North Belfast. (Gaffikin et al., 2008). However, Alexandra and Waterworks Park are divided resources. Alexandra Park is famously physically divided by a peaceline. Waterworks parks is, less visibly, socio-spatially divided, as the Protestant community keep to the northern parts of the park while the Catholic community use the southern parts. Cavehill park (picture 4.23), in the outer regions of North Belfast and the walkways are however pointed out as shared territory (this fact does not necessarily mean it is shared space as described in the previous section), but it is the exception to the

¹ Frank Gaffikin, Interview, 2013-03-14

Map 4.6 Public Space in North Belfast. Original Map by Chris Karelse, Queens University of Belfast 2013. Map digitally edited by Author. Used with permission.



CHAPTER 5.

BELFAST

CASE PROJECT

Site and Proposal



5.1 Belfast Case Project Proposal - Introduction

Initial considerations on the design process

This chapter will present my proposal for the design of a site in North Belfast. Initially this proposal was supposed to respond to the findings of the overview of divided cities. However as this project progressed I became aware that I had been naive in my belief that I would be able to propose a design which could benefit the process of spatial reconciliation on its own, and that a public space might not be the best use of this site for the communities of North Belfast.

Additionally, the complexity of divided cities prolonged the theoretical investigations. This proposal was thus developed in parallel with the theory. As I discovered new possible paths and ideas in writing the theory I tried them out in my proposal, and when I encountered new issues or ideas in developing my proposal I further investigated theory and literature relating to these ideas. The design process of the proposal thus affected the theoretical investigations, and the theoretical investigations in turn led to new ideas to try out in the proposal.

As such, in the end the development of the proposal took on a different role in my process, not functioning as a final result which responds to a particular set of ideas on how to work with divided cities as a landscape architect, but rather used as a tool used in the process of creating my own ideas. It is thus important to note for the reader that the proposal was developed before my theories of

Site selection criteria

My background research led me to establish a couple of criteria for choosing a site for my project.

1. The site should be located in North Belfast rather than the city centre

North Belfast presents greater complexity and possibility to work with issues of the divided city than central Belfast. First of all central Belfast has already undergone extensive regeneration schemes. In addition, as previously noted, the division with its consequences is more prevalent in the peripheral regions of inner-city Belfast, especially around the interfaces. A majority of the interfaces are located in North Belfast and as a consequence this area also contains the highest number of depraved land and urban voids.

2. The site should be located at an interface between Catholic and Protestant communities

Since one of the main issues with regards to public space in divided cities is the loss of former shared public space at the interfaces



Map 5.1 Skegoneill: location relative to Belfast at large

reconciliatory landscapes was formulated, which is why it does not respond directly to these ideas.

Instead responding to a set of formulated theories and conclusions - or applying strategies used in other divided cities - the process of developing this proposal became a tool to relate the theories and examples examined in the literature review to a real situation in order to understand them better.

For example, in addition to reviewing the concept of memory and the examples from Berlin and Belfast, I explored this concept in the design by trying to think about what a non-sectarian memoryscape could look like if it was created on the project site, which in turn made me reflect on the issues with such a proposal.

As such, rather than serving as an implementation of pre-existing strategies and theories, developing this proposal served as a way for me to reflect on the possibilities and limitations of landscape architecture as a tool for spatial reconciliation in divided cities set within a real context. The proposal should thus not be read as a direct application of the theories described in chapter 3, but rather a tool which helped me to arrive at my own conclusions, aiding me in the process developing my own theory of active and passive reconciliatory landscapes described at the end of that chapter.

the highest possibility for reengaging communities from the perspective of the landscape architect appeared to me to be at the derelict interface areas between Catholic and Protestant wards. Since access to the 'cosmopolitan' city centre is restricted to many of North Belfast's inhabitants, revitalising these areas could improve the overall quality of life for the residents of these areas.

3. The site should be located on brownland or derelict open space rather than land which is currently used parkland or public space

Initially my project was supposed to focus on improvements of Alexandra Park or the Waterworks, however, since North Belfast would benefit more from regeneration of the derelict spaces which are a direct or indirect consequence of the division (as described in chapter 1, 3 and 4) I decided that I wanted to work with a site where this type of character was prominent.

Site description

The Skegoneill avenue site is a medium sized buffer zone interface area of depraved land located on the interface between the predominantly Catholic ward of Chichester Park and the Protestant part of Duncairn and Fort William Ward (see Map 5.1).

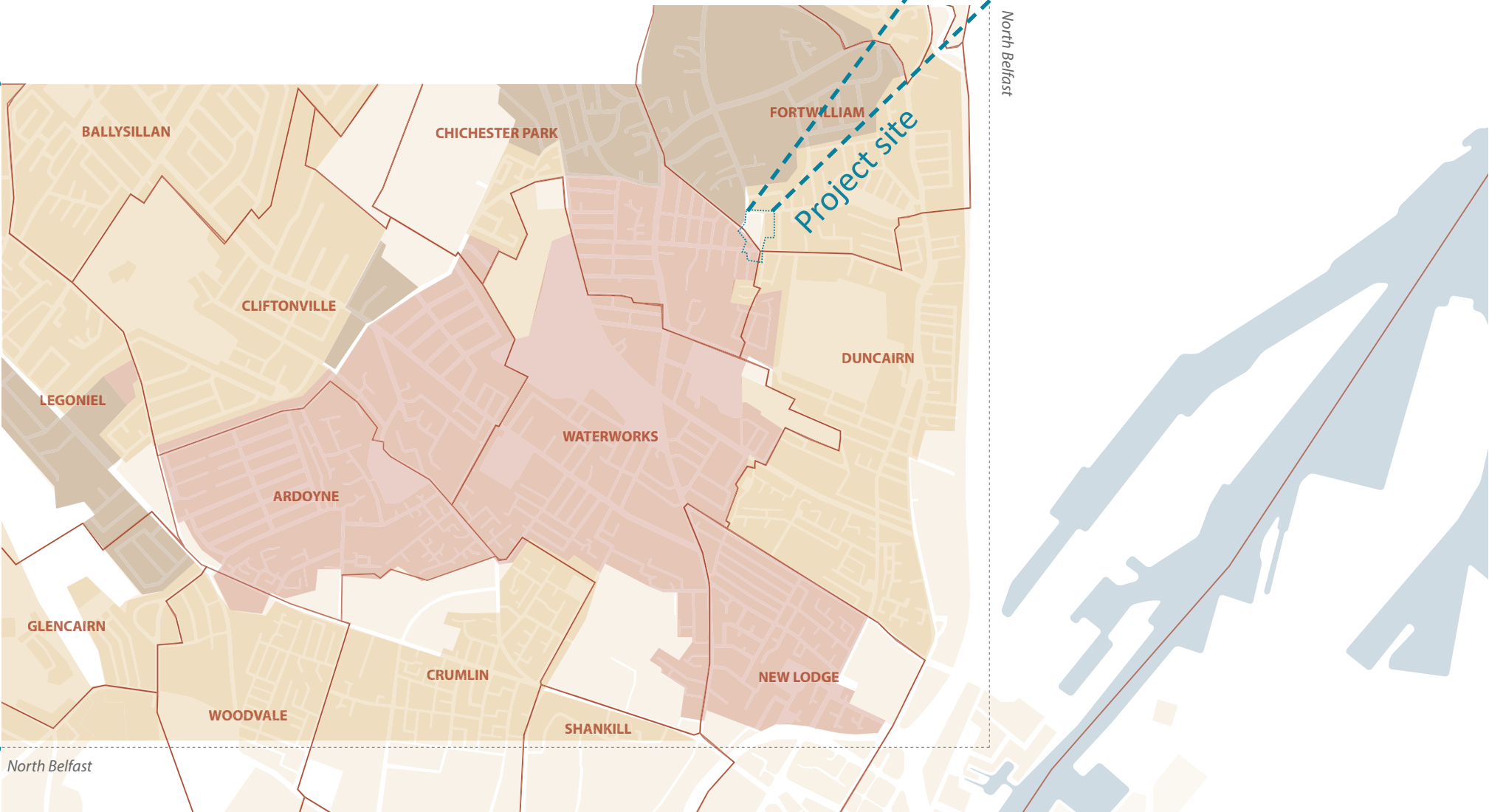
The site also connects to the northern part of the Fort William Ward, an area with a major demographic containing mixed middle and upper class population. While the site hasn't been separated by a physical partition, a strip of derelict and abandoned houses has served as an effective buffer zone between the two communities.

Why Skegoneill?

In addition to fulfilling the criteria the interesting part about Skegoneill is that it is an area which is increasingly being used by both communities. There is some evidence to support this. In a re-used container on the site there is a Corner Coffee Shop. The owner of this shop keeps a ledger over her costumers, and this information indicates that the shop and the area is increasingly being used and shared by both communities. In addition, the area is used as a site for cross-community activities.¹

The location between the two arterial routes and the fact that both communities are starting to share the site makes the site ideal for development into a shared public space as it could aid in further nurturing and strengthening this shared use. Regeneration of this area could provide local residents with an important addition to their public spaces and serve as a catalyst for economic, social and environmental regeneration and spatial reconciliation in the area.

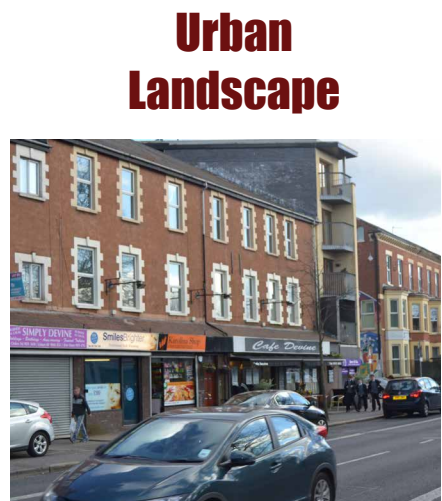
¹ Notes from guided walk in North Belfast with Chris Karelse and Ovgu Pelen Karelse, 2013-03-14



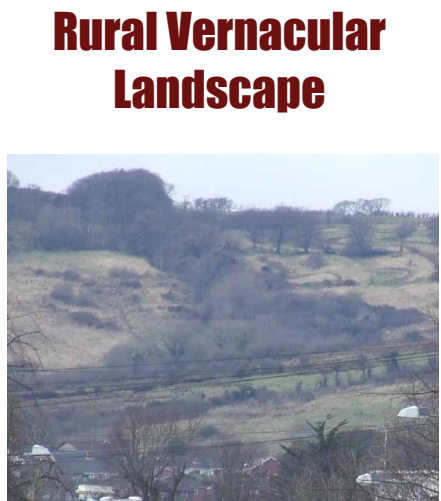
5.2 Landscape Context Analysis



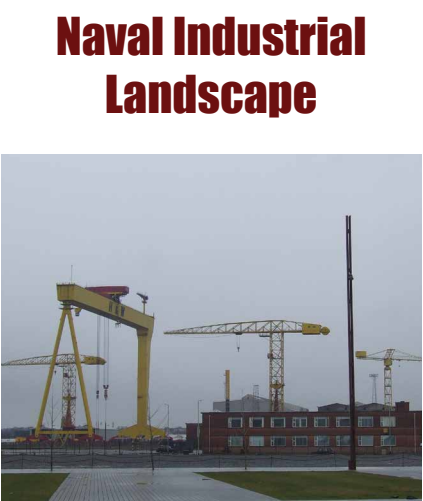
Map 5.2 Skegoneill location relative to areas of different landscape character



Picture 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3
Urban Landscape



Picture 5.4, 5.5 & 5.6
Rural vernacular/natural landscape



Picture 5.7, 5.8 & 5.9
Naval industrial landscape/waterfront

Skegoneill - Between urban and rural

The Skegoneill site itself is located within an predominately urban landscape, however a Landscape Character Assessment of the areas visually connected to Skegoneill reveal its location between four areas with very different characteristics (see map 5.2 and picture 5.1-5.9)

The interface area itself has a distinct urban characteristic, with residential architecture of the neighbourhood consisting mainly of 2-3 storey high, pitched roof red-brick row houses typical to the UK. Additionally the site embodies many of the characteristics prevalent in the many regions of blighted land and abandoned neighbourhoods surrounding the dividing line in North Belfast, with several of the houses being uninhabited and suffering from severe dereliction (picture 5.10).



Picture 5.10 Bored up and derelict residential house at Skegoneill-Glendore

Number	1	2	3	4
Description	Hills	Cave hill County park	Industrial waterfront and Titanic Quarter	Urban residential neighbourhood - Skegoneill
Visual assesment criteria				
SCALE	Large	Large	Large	Small
TEXTURE	Smooth	Very rough	Rough	Rough
COLOUR	Muted Colorful	Muted	Muted	Monochrome
COMPLEXITY	Complex	Diverse	Simple	Complex
FORM	Man made organic	Natural organic	Angular	Straight
SCALE	Large	Large	Large	Small
ENCLOSURE	Expansive	Expansive	Open	Enclosed
UNITY	Fragmented	Interrupted	Unified	Interrupted
SCENERY	Rural	Natural	Urban	Industrial
CONDITION	Maintained	Maintained	Very derelict	Maintained
Perception				
SECURITY	X	X	X	Unsettling
STIMULUS	Interesting	Challenging	Bland	Monotonous
TRANQUILITY	Peaceful	Peaceful	Occupied	Busy
PLEASURE	Attractive	Beautiful	Unpleasant	Unpleasant
PUBLIC PRIVATE	Half public	Very public	Half public	Half private
ACCESSIBILITY	Inaccessible	Very inaccessible	Accessible	Very inaccessible

Figure 5.1 Checklist for landscape character assesment

To the North West a view of rolling hills and a vernacular Northern Irish agricultural landscape and pastures provides a backdrop to the site and a contrast to the urban landscape (picture 5.11). This area has a rural character and bears visual evidence of human settlement and agricultural practice in the form of tree rows and stonewalls.



Picture 5.11 View of rural vernacular landscape from Skegoneill Rd.

Directly to the North the Belfast landmark of Cave hill, the forest clad cliff formation towers over the urban landscape (picture 5.12). As previously mentioned it has been pointed out by North Belfast residents as one of the few parks in the area which is effectively shared (Gaffikin et al. 2008). The cliffs resemble a large human face and are famous for providing inspiration for native Belfast author Jonathan Swifts magnum opus Gulliver's Travels. This area is resembles the pastoral hills in terms of vegetation and colours but is less pastoral and more wild and dramatic in its character.



Picture 5.12 View of Cavehill County Park from Skegoneill Rd.

To the south the lies the regenerated waterfront district of the Titanic Quarter (picture 5.13 & 5.14) and the Belfast industrial waterfront with industrial cargo cranes referred to by locals as 'David' and 'Goliath' (picture 5.15) is visible in a distance from Skegoneill Avenue. The two bright yellow cranes were described by many Belfast natives as a contemporary landmark, one of the few symbols without unionist/loyalist affiliation. ¹

1. At least this was the opinion noted by two Belfast residents on different occasions during my visit.



Picture 5.13 (below), 5.14 (right), 5.15 (below right) & 5.16 (below in corner) Naval industrial landscape/waterfront



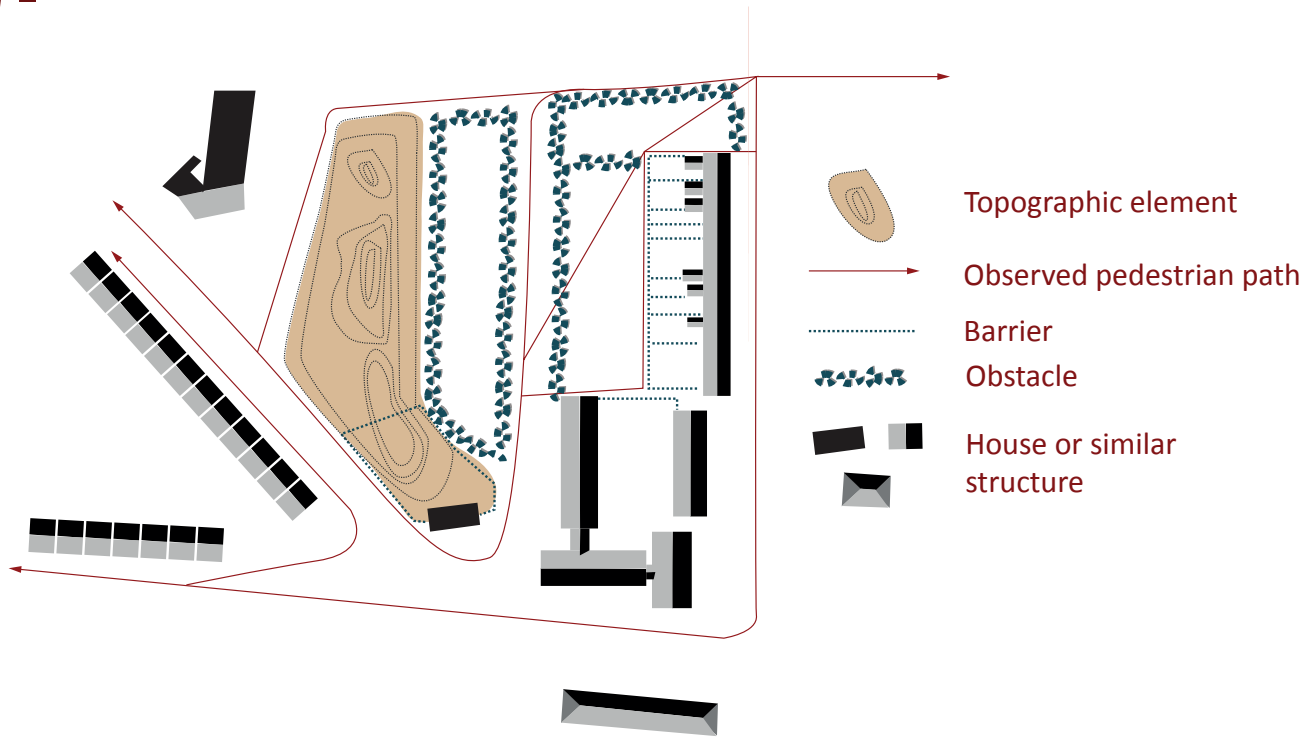


Picture 5.17 Panoramic of Skegoneill square current state

5.3 Project Site Inventory - Structures, Topography & pedestrian paths

Movement patterns across the site today are restrained by the rocks. While they do not function as a non-permeable barrier they deter free circulation, movement across the site as well as spontaneous activity. As a result, the site today is mainly passed by and ignored on the way to other places and does not invite people to make use of it (see map 5.3).

As the site is located in North Belfast, one of the areas where the topography is most present in Belfast of the square has an evident incline. The incline is steepest at the vegetated area to the north of The Square where the ground is uneven and dominated by several mounds.



Map 5.3 Structures, topography and pedestrian flows

5.4 Project Site Inventory - General impressions

Today the site is one of the ‘urban voids’ of North Belfast and as such shares similar characteristics with other interface areas across the city. Many houses surrounding the site face dereliction, and the area radiates abandonment and neglect. Large rocks are spaced evenly across the site.

The site borders on a larger residential compound in the south, and a rows of run of the mill British red-brick row houses to the north and east. Several of these houses are

extremely derelict and marked for demolition.

Further up north is there is a mixed middle-class neighbourhood spanning across the Wards of Fortwilliam and Chichester Park.

However, there is some signs that things are beginning to change and people are reclaiming the site, as evident by the corner shop in the western section of the site.

5.5 Project Site Inventory - Vegetation

A larger part of the site is relatively free of vegetation. Vegetation on the site mainly consists of larger patches of wild, spontaneous and ruderal vegetation. Other plants found on the site were instances of Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and Hoarse (*Ulex europaeus* & *Ulex galii Planchon*). Hoarse in particular is a common plant which is prevalent in the Northern Irish vernacular landscape (NMNI, 2010).



5.6 Project Site Inventory - Materials

Materials common at the site and its surroundings include large granite rocks, concrete foundation, red-brick and other materials from demolished buildings.



5.7 Project Site Charcter Areas

Three Main Areas

My interpretation of the site is that it is mainly composed out of three distinct main areas different, each with its own character and function (see map 5.3).

The first and most prominent is the large central area which I will refer to as “The Square”, which can be divided into several sections. In addition, there are two smaller areas in the western corner of the site which I will refer to as “The Stage” and “The Garden”.

The Garden

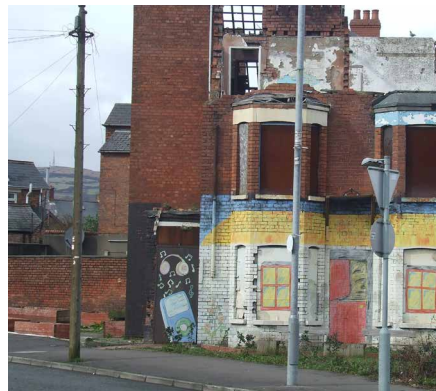
Where Glendore Avenue and Skegoneill avenue intersects a depraved former corner-site residential house covered in non-sectarian graffiti and is used as a small-scale informal garden where small planters have been placed on the curb and in the backyard of a depraved and abandoned building (picture 5.18 & 5.19)

The Stage

The Stage is a small rectangular site (picture 5.22) to the west of The Garden and The Square. Similarly to The Square, the open space at the Stage is the result of a demolished residential building. However, the tile-covered floor and part of the foundation (picture 4.20), which raises 1-2 decimetres above ground-level has been left intact and is used as a stage for during public community gatherings on different occasions, such as an all welcoming S:t Patricks Day celebration (picture 4.21), during which poetry slams and live music concerts are performed at the improvised theatre.



Picture 5.20 (top left), 5.21 (top right) & 5.22 (bottom) - The Stage (5.20 & 5.22) event poster for public event on this site (5.21)



Picture 5.18 - The Garden



Picture 5.19 - The Garden



Map 5.3 Skegoneill: Project Site Character Areas

The Square

The Square is a relatively large rectangular open space between Skegoneill Ave. and Glendore Ave. The site has not been an open space in the past, but is the result of a demolition of several rows of residential buildings, with one additional row scheduled for future demolition.

The Square itself can be divided up into three sections. The first part belongs to the container based corner store/coffee shop and adjacent garden (picture 5.25). This area is semi-private and fenced in, as it owned or rented by the shop-keeper. In the backyard of the store there is a small garden with a couple of hens. The corner store is also used as a small café and can be described as a local node. Altogether this enterprise brings a bit of life and character to and otherwise monotonous and lifeless site.



Picture 5.23 (top left), 5.24 (top right) & 5.25 (bottom left) Pictures of the site (5.23 & 5.24) & the container shop (5.25)

Area definitions

- 1 The Square - “Soft” section - Public
- 2 The Square - “Hard” section - Public
- 3 Cornershop - Semi-public space
- 4 Abandoned derelict houses - Semi private
- 5 The Garden - Semi-public
- 6 The Stage - Public

The largest part of The Square is the central area. It is rectangular in shape and covered with large rocks spaced evenly in rectangular patterns along the sidewalk (picture 5.23), there to keep “travelling people” from using the site as a caravan park. This part is “hard” in its appearance, evenly sloping and empty of vegetation.

The second part is an overgrown patch of land which is dominated by an uneven topography in the form of several mounds (picture 5.24). This area is more “soft” and wild in its character.

The last part is a row of derelict houses marked for demolition. In its present state semi-private space directly contributes to the site feeling of abandonment and unsafety.

1 This information was presented to me by the shop keeper of the container store



SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Location is accessible for and used by both communities
- Visual connection with surrounding landscapes
- The site is already established as a place where positive meetings across the boundaries take place

Weaknesses

A majority of the buildings and landscape is derelict and in poor condition which could turn it into a venue for anti-social behaviour

The site feels abandoned and apart from the corner-shop there is little evidence that people actually use the site

Opportunities

Turning the site into a space where cross community activities are encouraged

Enhancing the local character of the side by connecting it with its surroundings

Threats

Ethnicization of the space due to territorial marking or similar sectarian territorial behaviour.

Vandalism during the periods of increased violence such as marching season

Belfast Case Project Proposal

RECOVERING COMMON GROUND - Reconciling people & past through regeneration of Skegoneill Square

The proposal for Skegoneill Square envisions a new public square on the former residential site at the interface between the wards of Chichester Park, Fort William and Duncairn.

The design draws inspiration from the characters of the surrounding areas identified in the LCA analysis. Characteristics and materials ordinarily found in the interface void are re-used and incorporated in the proposal, as this as a form of cultural landscape, albeit with currently negative connotations. This could transform elements and everyday landscapes associated with negative experiences in these abandoned and derelict areas into positive counterparts by incorporating them into a new context, establishing these areas as areas of opportunity rather than threat.

Agricultural patterns from the surrounding hills have been reinterpreted in rows of trees. The northernmost part is kept wild, and the mounds are kept for informal play along with a minor playground is constructed on the site along with organic plant beds made from rough granite rocks, drawing upon the character of Cave hill. This area could function as a natural playground which can provide children with a playscape which could provide alternatives to the otherwise monotone and often fenced-in playgrounds in North Belfast.

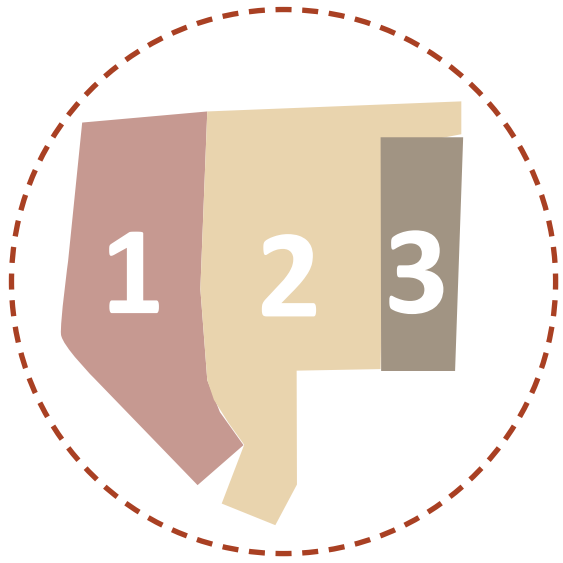
Additionally three core concepts/strategies were used in the design process, Memory, Identity and Cooperation. These concepts have been have been inspired by my investigations and were used as a tool to generate the form and function of the site.

Part of the layout of the design is kept relatively open and flexible, allowing for further additions such as temporary constructions similar to the container corner shop already active on the site. The proposal opens up for possible future spaces for cross-community meetings and collaboration inspired by the works of Groundwork. While the proposal could not be developed with methods of community collaboration it still can promote spaces around which such collaboration to be undertaken in the future. The design as such proposes the starting point for a landscape based framework within which collaborative projects are allowed and encouraged to engage in further development. This could be the first in a network of similar small-scale public green spaces in the form of pocket parks and community squares which could stretch from Cave Hill to the commercial city centre - restoring the urban voids, reinforcing and encouraging cross-border community relations. This approach could reanimate the interfaces and connect the shared spaces of North Belfast.

Reinterpreted landscape characters

At the conceptual level the design draws inspiration from the location of Skegoneill in the surrounding landscape into the design. The proposal takes its inspiration from the surrounding landscape and the transition from natural to rural to wild as well as the contrast between the open and wild, the semi open rural and unified and the intimate urban landscape is reinterpreted and conceptualized in the three sections of the Square.

1. NATURAL
WILD
NATURAL ORGANIC
FRAGMENTED
OPEN
2. RURAL
AGRICULTURAL PATTERNS
UNIFIED
SEMI-OPEN
3. URBAN
MAN-MADE
ANGULAR
RUDERAL
CLOSED/INTIMATE



FLEXIBLE SPACE ? DIVISION MEMORIAL GARDEN



Picture 5.24 Panoramic view of Skegoneill square proposal

Belfast Case Project Proposal

Excavated and reused materials & native plants



To enhance the visual qualities of the site without ignoring the troubled history of the interface areas, construction materials and plants are recovered from the site and incorporated into the new proposal. Concrete foundations from the former houses are excavated and reused as paving stones for the memorial garden. The large rocks used as roadblock on the site are recovered and reused as informal seating, and construction materials for various purposes, such as plant beds and the supporting wall for levelling out part of the sloping areas by the northern part of The Square.

Plant materials native to the region and found which has been found on the site include Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and Hoarse (*Ulex europaeus* & *Ulex galii Planchon*) as well as species common to Northern Irish heaths and cliff regions surrounding Belfast including Juniper (*Juniperus communis*), Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Bell heather (*Erica cinerea*) (NMNI, 2010).



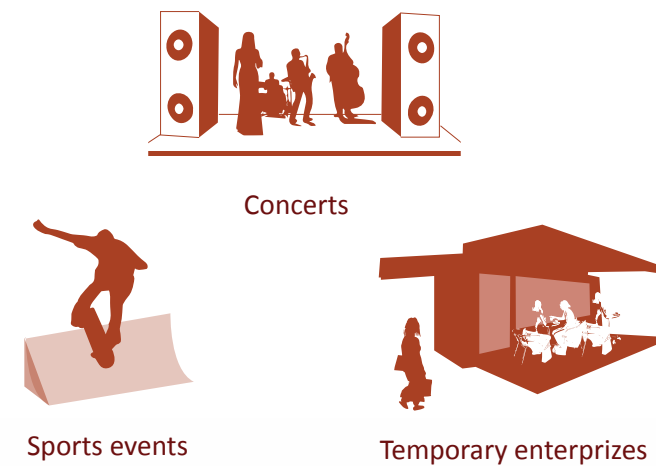
Flexible Space



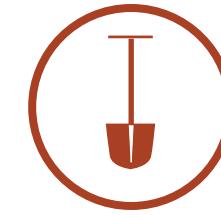
Part of the area is retained open. The function of this area should be a flexible space open whose use is open for suggestions by local communities. This space could be used as a temporary location for small enterprises - temporary start-up offices, shops & restaurants. It could also temporary cultural spaces for larger concerts or neutral sports events for sports without Protestant Loyalist or Catholic Unionist affiliation. These activities could occur for a period of time but should always be seen as temporary. The point is

that it's formal use and function should be flexible, and adaptable, initially not claiming the site for any single use in order for it to be able to provide for different activities which span the social spectrum. As cross-community relations improve it could be left as it is or be developed further through collaborative projects, ensuring that whatever activity or function the site takes on is anchored in the needs and desires of the local community rather than driven purely by economic forces.

Possible temporary activities



Skegoneill Community Garden & Public Stage



To preserve and improve opportunities for positive everyday meetings the activities already present at Skegoneill the current functions of The Stage and The Garden should therefore be encouraged and facilitated through further development.

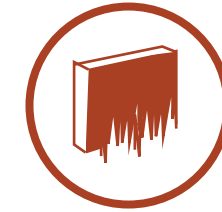
The Community Garden could create a small intimate green space where residents would be allowed to collaboratively tend to the garden. As the availability of private green space in North Belfast is low this could provide an opportunity for people to engage in activities which are not otherwise accessible to them in their everyday environments. The derelict building could be regenerated and transformed into a community hub which may be used for indoor activities and cross-community meetings. The Stage is

could be fitted with a new roofed structure which, other than retaining the function as a raised area for public performance simultaneously can be used as shelter from the rainy Northern Irish weather for both artists and spectators. Informal seating could be installed to provide a place to sit for the elderly during events.

Both of these event spaces could be used for peaceful events and gatherings during dates otherwise associated with sectarian activities and behaviour, providing spaces where people can participate in non-sectarian alternatives to these socially exclusive celebrations and gather around the notion of peace and co-existence rather than violence and division.



Peacewall Exhibition Garden



As the conflict in Belfast moves towards resolution and the walls of North Belfast begin to come down, the proposal envisions the possible reuse and replacement of segments of the walls into an exhibition of these artefacts of division at the southern part of The Square. This idea is inspired by the preservation of the Berlin Wall, described in Chapter 3. The exhibition garden could be constructed out of materials found on site and retain the outlines of the structure of the former residential buildings which previously stood

on top of the land on which the exhibition may be built. Plant beds could be constructed from rocks and reused red-brick retained from the demolished row of houses and concrete foundations excavated and reused as hard landscaping materials for 'the floor' of the garden. Patches of ground floor are filled with soil and left open for spontaneous vegetation in order to imitate the vegetation character found in many interface voids.



Picture 5.25 Panoramic view of Skegoneill square proposal

5.8 Belfast Case Project - Conclusion

The process of developing proposal has given me several insights on the possibilities and limitations of landscape architecture working in divided cities. In the end this proposal was developed by myself without any direct input from local communities - as building trust with and relationships between these communities takes a lot of time and requires expertise which I did not have access to. This was perhaps the greatest weakness of my process, which affected all aspects of the proposal, both in terms of form and function.

My attempts to try to connect the site to a local identity was the result of my own attempts to find something which unites both communities, and without input from these communities the only thing I could find was the environment which they live in - the character of the interfaces and the surrounding landscapes. This source of identity is not anchored in the needs or knowledge of the local community but rather my own interpretation of how a sense of local identity can be achieved. The same goes for the function of the site. As I did not process any knowledge about the specific “wants and needs” of the people using this site I felt I could only propose functions which would could be further development by the communities in order to incorporate the concept of collaboration in my proposal.

Working more extensively with communities could have created a sense of shared identity to this place by allowing them to create it together. If the proposal had been developed by such a process a sense of common ownership could have been fed back into both communities. Instead my proposal tries to create a sense of identity by relying on aesthetic characters identified as important by myself as opposed to local residents. While using this method to anchor the site to the surrounding landscape could work in an ordinary situation I believe that by working as a lone designer instead of creating the basics site identity together with both communities my own proposal misses out on opportunities to engage in spatial reconciliation.

Similarly, my attempts to incorporate the concept of memory through the Peacewall Exhibition Garden could in retrospective be

considered to be a bit naive. While the case of Berlin indicates an importance for some kind of preservation of these artefacts is important, this form is probably not the best way to engage with this problem. However, this aspect of the proposal was in part what led me to my own inquiry about the nature of memoryscapes in divided cities in general and Belfast in particular. Thus, while it may not have been the best way to approach the concept of memory in this particular context, it paved way for my own understanding of the role memoryscapes may play in the process of promoting the transformation of the divided city into an inclusive urban environment.

Because of the complex nature of community collaboration in these areas this was not a possibility for me, however this discovering this limitation in my process was in part what led me to the realization the importance of involving communities and cross-border collaboration and engaging in reconciliation in the process of developing landscape architecture in divided cities as opposed to my initial belief that reconciliation could be aided in a well-informed design of public landscapes.

As such, equally important for my own process of understanding how landscape architecture can work in order to aid spatial reconciliation in divided cities was the insights which were the results of considering what I could not do (working with both communities, making use of local knowledge and involving cross-border collaboration in the process). These limitations made me consider how a better design process would have looked, for example the necessity of involving and collaborating with communities when undertaking a project in such a site. This was important for developing my theories as they made me reflect on how these limitations in the design process could impact the possible benefits of landscape architecture attempting to engage in spatial reconciliation in a real situation.

Finally they made me further understand first-hand the importance of any attempts to engage in spatial reconciliation or urban development in divided cities as a landscape architect to be a part of a wider process of peace-building and post-conflict recovery.

CHAPTER 6.

Reflection



6.1 Reseach quetions

Answering the research questions:

How can landscape architecture be used to benefit the peace building process of divided cities and landscapes?

As my project has shown landscape architecture can benefit the reconciliation process of divided cities and landscapes, both as a passive and an active actor in the reconciliatory process. Through this engagement in reconciliation landscape architecture might make positive contributions to the over-all peace process of these post-conflict environments. The opportunities for landscape architecture lies in pro-actively engaging in the creation of what can be summarized as *reconciliatory landscapes*, spaces which *actively* or *passively* promotes spatial reconciliation through the *product* (for example Anna Grichtings’ Green Line Proposal) or *process* (for instance Groundworks’ improvement of Alexandra Park) through deliberately considering and promoting opportunities social inclusion, equality and equal right to non-sectarian representation in the landscape while pro-actively working against and avoiding decisions which could lead to further division, marginalization, discrimination and exclusion.

How can landscape architecture be used in the process of promoting spatial reconciliation in the case of North Belfast?

In many areas in Belfast the general challenge for urban regeneration is a normalisation of the everyday environment. Due a tendency for transformation of borders into boundaries in divided cities, spaces which in most cities facilitate positive encounters across the social spectrum are a scarce resource in North Belfast. These boundary spaces, such as Skegoneill, are instead characterized by deprivation, abandonment and urban voids. As long as these areas remain uncared for they risk serving as venues for sectarian and anti-social behaviour by attracting crowds seeking to antagonize the other community. Regeneration of these areas is thus a key issue in order to minimize the opportunities for sectarian confrontation.

Landscape architecture holds the potential to reactivate and animate these spaces - transforming them from negative boundaries into positive borders - and could in the process be used as a tool to positively and creatively envisioning and promoting such opportunities. By facilitating the creation of a network of *passive* and *active reconciliatory landscapes* (similar to my own proposal or the work of Groundwork) which could serve to create and reinforce positive cross-community activities and relations in both *product* and *process* these socially shunned and stigmatized spaces could be transformed into shared places where positive meetings between communities not only taking place - but is encouraged. In doing this, landscape architecture could contribute the process of spatial reconciliation in North Belfast.

6.2 The Proposal

Engaging in reconciliation as a landscape architect

In the light of my investigations I believe that the potentially most successful landscape based projects in terms of promoting spatial reconciliation are those which work with solutions that could function as both passive and active reconciliatory landscapes through both product and process.

My own process engaged the issue through a conceptual proposal. The final proposal was developed through a passive reconciliatory landscape process and resulted in a vision for a passive and active reconciliatory landscape. The proposal tries to engage the issues of division and reconciliation by trying to include active and passive opportunities for cross-border engagement in the product.

However it was developed by me without any first hand input by communities. As such, it cannot be claimed to be the result of an active reconciliatory landscape process. I acknowledge that in a real situation this would be an inherently riskier approach as any such successful attempts would require a great deal of knowledge, responsibility and sensitivity on part of the designer. Additionally the potential benefits and quality of the the final proposal with regards to community and spatial reconciliation of the project are never sure and can’t be measured until long after the project has been constructed. Similarly any project which is undertaken without the direct cooperation of the communities will face an uncertainty around whether or not they will accept and adopt the project or reject it completely.

However, this strategy can have some advantages in an initial face of a project, as it can allow for the creation of more visionary ideas which could later be anchored in an active reconciliatory landscape process. Neither of these ways of engage in an active reconciliatory landscape process were possible for me to attempt for practical reasons. As the success of my theoretical project is hard to valuate I can only speculate upon the possible success my proposal could have had would it have been a real project.

Nevertheless, as I described in Chapter 2, practical implication was never the goal for me when making the proposal. Nevertheless, I must acknowledge that my proposal was based mostly on theory, intuition and assumptions and however swell prepared or grounded in theory or data a proposal is no plan survives first contact with the enemy. Divided cities are extremely complex in their nature, and no matter how much information one can process. The process of my own project has re-affirmed in me some of the warnings regarding the need for urban development and landscape based approaches to take place within the context of a greater cohesive and multi-disciplinary process of peace building and post-conflict

regeneration. It is nigh impossible for any single disciplinary approach, let alone, a single person to successfully navigate in the almost labyrinthine environment - metaphorical, theoretical and actual - that is the divided city.

As such, I believe a truly reconciliatory landscape project must be part of a larger, cohesive effort reconciliatory project, both in terms of urban regeneration, spatial reconciliation and traditional peace-process.

In addition, If landscape architecture to aid in introducing the concept of a shared environment in the collective imagination of the inhabitants of these divided landscapes we must also acknowledge that improvement of public space does not necessarily entail reconciliation. In order to facilitating an urban environment where pluralism and tolerant co-existence of a multitude of identities is encouraged rather than repressed we must also be aware of our role and position in the social structures - cultural, ideological, political and hierarchical - which contributes to shaping the physical and cultural landscape within which we work.

I also want to recognise that landscape based spatial interventions in this contested landscape do not have to be complicated. Groundwork for instance, create relatively modest and small-scale landscape architecture and has nevertheless been successful in engaging communities in border crossing encounters and positive visions of the future. However, I believe that in order to tackle the convoluted issues of the divided city it should, out of necessity, try to incorporate a broad perspective taken from a multi-disciplinary approach in order to encapsulate and positively engage as many as possible of the aspects which affect and perpetuates the division. Such an approach holds the possibility for yielding daedal and feasible solutions to a delicate and complicated problem.

Aesthetics of dereliction - possible considerations

In my project I proposed a reinterpretation of the characteristic found in many interface areas through the reuse of materials found on the site. My idea was that incorporating this character into a new, positive socio-cultural context can turn these areas into a source of pride and character for North Belfast (much as has been done in Berlins former no-man’s land). However, I must admit that since I myself have a preference for architecture and landscape architecture employing kind of “aesthetic of dereliction” and re-use of materials, so in retrospective the question is if this choice is was a decision made out of regard for the local social and physical context or the manifestation of my own taste.

6.2 The Proposal

I feel must indulge myself in a bit of self-criticism here, since there may be some possible consequences of using this particular type of aesthetic language in the context of North Belfast. I noted in Chapter 4 that since the urban voids and derelict spaces of North Belfast have remained in their depraved state for such a long time many residents here are eager for regeneration of these areas but disillusioned with the prospect of it. As such using this kind of aesthetic language could - in a worst case scenario - be seen as a form of provocation by some of these community members.¹

This is of course not a unique situation for divided cities. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Gaffikin (2010) reminds us that there will always be some form of contest over land-use in cities. I believe this notion can be extended to encompass questions of the aesthetic language of the environment as well. However, in a city like Belfast rather innocent choices can incite un-proportionally hostile responses (as indicated by Sonia Harrison's remark regarding the possible aggressions induced by the wrong choice of perennial arrangements). This may seem a bit bizarre to the outsider, but in cities like Belfast the law of unintended consequences is the one-eyed man in the land of the blind. There is thus a tendency for such minor disputes to escalate quickly. This can lead to very serious (and sometimes violent) situations. As such, these matters must be considered and I shall therefore take a self-critical view of my choice of aesthetic.

This self-critique also exemplifies that even though we may aim for the creation of a reconciliatory landscape through-out the process, without the input from communities and other perspectives there is always a risk that we may make decisions which threatens this cause. This being said, I do think it is inevitable to not incorporate some of your preferences into the design process but I believe it is still useful to be self-critical about the unintended consequences which aesthetic choices can have. I've found that focusing too much on self-critique can simultaneously be an obstacle for the possibilities of the creative process to create innovative and visionary approaches to the issues facing the divided city.

Spatial reconciliation as a focus - the issues

As the reader could probably note from the last section, my design process was heavily influenced considerations and reflections on the possible outcome of the project with regards to the impacts could product in the social landscape. Because of the complex nature of the interfaces in relation to the conflict in Belfast, I found myself relating every decision I made in the design process to what possible consequence that particular choice could have for the reconciliatory process. Such reflections are - or at least should be -

undertaken in every project, but as the unintended consequences in the contested city are so dire, I became rather obsessed with trying to predict every possible interpretation and angle in which my proposal could be seen as provocative.

The question is if the potential benefits for landscape architecture in delivering innovative and visionary proposals as a result of an open and creative process can be somewhat burdened by focusing too heavily on the goal of reconciliation.

This may in my case have led to a focus on solving the problem rather than letting creativity run free in the initial phase of the project and adapt according to the particular circumstances of the divided city in later stages of the design process. This may have resulted in missed opportunities for discovering alternative innovative approaches to the issues of division.

To conclude, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the complexity of the issues and perspectives one must take into consideration when dealing with divided cities, however I have also find it to be a challenge which fosters insights into the possibilities and nature of landscape architecture, providing wisdoms which can be used in other contexts.

Reflections - From the divided landscape to the social and political landscape

Looking at my process, I realize that my project has been a focus on the ideological, social and political implications of landscape architecture - and how it is shaped by the same forces - as it has been an investigation into divided cities. It has been a critical process for me, both in the form of an introspective process with musings and self-argumentation about what I do, why I do it and for whom I do it, but also in terms of reflective review of global practice and how it is shaped by economic, social and ideological forces.

In reviewing theoretical and practical implications on landscape architecture in contested environments, I have encountered several ways in which these forces influence the form and function of landscape architecture. Take for instance the ideological-nationalist forces shaping Israeli landscape architecture and urban environment, or the economical drivers behind the new urban spaces of Belfast & Beirut. To me this exemplifies ways in which these forces inevitably shape and shape both our theory and practice. While there is little we can do about this matters as individuals, if we want to be part of a practice which places the needs of the many before the needs of the few, we need to be conscious of this fact in order sustain and be a part of a more critical approach to landscape architecture.

1 The same logic can probably also be applied to other aspects of the proposal, such as the division exhibition garden or even the use of land as public space as opposed to residential housing, but I do not think it is necessary to expand upon these themes as they would lead to the same conclusion, and I have already made my point.

6.3. Methodology

Unchartered waters - the search for theory

Early on in my investigation it became clear that very little had been done in the form of both theory and practice. In the rare cases where proposals had been developed much of my knowledge of these proposals is based on second hand accounts and reviews of these designs told from a specific point of view. In addition, neither Anna Grichtings Green Line nor the full extent of Latz + Partners proposal has been realised, which means that any theories on the possible impacts - both positive and negative - that these landscape project may remain just that.

One reason for this lack of both landscape based theory and practice which focuses on divided cities is probably that many of the conflicts are fairly recent. As such, there is much to be found concerning the consequences of division and the issues facing urban development - and as a consequence landscape architecture- but few examples concerning implemented responses to it. Another reason could be the tendency for urban development in such cities to not directly critically engage in issues of division. Take for instance some of Belfast's cosmopolitan spaces, which while they have been successful in regenerating the urban environment have done so through ignoring the issues that Belfast face. This is probably done out of a combination of the complexity of the issues facing the more heavily contested areas of the city with a desire to leave the conflict narrative behind and I do not intend to argue with these processes here, but it does possibly account for the lack of well-informed landscape projects dealing directly with issues of division.

My conclusion is thus based on a lot of second hand data, theoretical assumptions adapted from other disciplines and visionary proposals such as Grichtings. As some of the findings are based on possibly subjective opinions there will always be a question surrounding the validity of these findings and opinions, no matter how well referenced and formulated they are. Even if these opinions are backed up by data and interviews, these can also be manipulated by selecting data and information which supports the worldview of the author. I believe this is not which may not necessarily something done consciously, but can be the result of an unconscious selective process. This is true for almost all contexts, but it holds particular relevance to research which engages in contested environments such as divided cities, where information can be an important tool for furthering the desired narrative of one side. I do realize that some of my references exhibit such partiality. This is especially true for the data and information regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict as almost all of the reviewed information was somewhat skewed towards critique of the Israeli and clearly took a view of the Palestinians as the victims, however in this conflict I believe that certain impartiality is called for, as these matters

concern institutionalized ethnic discrimination, and I believe that impartiality should never trump equality.

Jack of All Trades - Master of None?

As the problem space of divided cities is extremely complex, I felt that research and insight into multiple subjects was required in order to deal with the issues at hand credibly. As there was very little of the literature which focused specifically on landscape architecture in these cities, I tried to make assumptions out of theories and investigations from the perspective of other fields. This may at times have carried me a little bit out of my depth, but perhaps most importantly - if I am to take a critical view on my own process - it may have resulted in missed opportunities for a more focused, deeper analysis of the subject. It is possible my project could have benefited from an even more focused problem space, but I believe that a complex issue such as divided cities requires at least recognition of the multiple parameters which cause this social and physical division. As landscape architecture exists both within the realm of the natural, the built, the spatial, the social and the political I believe it equally holds the potential to have possible impacts on these realms, and as such I believe any credible attempt for landscape architecture to engage in projects in this type of environment must recognize these aspects. Thus, while the investigations into identity, memory and collaboration in relation to landscape architecture may appear a bit shallow to the educated reader - as they are very complex concepts each of which could have been a project of its own - these concepts helped me as a conceptual approach for navigating and sorting through this mountain of theory which connects to the issues of divided cities.

The parallel process

Conducting this investigation as a parallel process between developing a proposal and researching theory and background has been both a blessing and a curse for my work. It did make my process rather open ended, which resulted in an uncertainty into the overall quality and progress of my project.

However, this process also had many upsides as it allowed me to use the writing as part of a creative process as opposed to just a fact-finding literature review. Using this writing as part of the process allowed me discover possibilities which I otherwise would have been missed. Similarly, conducting the design process in parallel with the writing - especially the investigations into global practice - allowed me to better relate to the issues which I was engaging in from the perspective of the landscape architect, as I could relate the theory to the challenges and issues I encountered in the process of my own project.

6.4 General discussion

Treading on thin ice - the benefits of stepping outside the comfortzone

In Chapter 2 I mentioned that divided cities arise from issues present in all cities. My investigation illuminated to me the intricate web which connects identity, territory and politics to landscape. Because of the extreme nature of divided cities these issues cannot be ignored in this context. However, I believe that acknowledgements of these factors are equally relevant for all cities, where ever we may find ourselves in our practice.

For the future social and environmental well-being of cities, incorporation of these patterns and issues into our process of creating landscapes and public space appears to me to be of great relevance for a critical and ethically responsible practice

I believe that a lot of landscape architects hide behind a veil of certainty that since we are what we do is inherently beneficial for the city, environment and people or indeed society in which we work. That since we deal with issues of environment, green space or other commonly held ‘positive’ environment, we believe that what we do somehow inevitably will serve ‘the greater good’. But by exposing ourselves to uncertain grounds such as divided cities can force us to question ‘certain truths’ which we previously held for granted about the impact, both positive and negative, which our efforts can have on social and political landscape. As such we can learn a lot about our own role in affecting social issues by engaging in projects where we can’t take the possible benefits of our profession to the future well-being of the context at hand for granted.

These efforts could generate a greater understanding of how cultural, political, social, economic and physical aspects of segregation shapes and can be shaped by landscape based practice. I believe this to be true to all aspects of our profession, both in terms of theory and practice, as theory informs practice and practice informs theory. Especially important to us could be the recognition and understanding of the connection between landscape practice and socio-political forces which could help us better understand how to employ landscape as a tool for striving towards landscapes of equality and justice.

6.4 Further research

As the issues of division are extremely complex and involved a number of different subjects there are many possible areas for further research for landscape architects, however a few instantly comes to mind.

Perhaps the most relevant with regards to this project would be further research on the result of practical implementation of passive and active reconciliatory landscape architecture. As my project only investigate the possible approaches for landscape architecture, I believe it would be interesting to examine if such approaches cultivate any major tangible results in terms of improving cross-community relations and benefitting the peace process at large. Such investigations could be done through interviews with a focus group of respondents from, for instance, the interface communities around Alexandra Park. Another way could be to analyze if there is any change in prevalence and/or patterns of crime associated with sectarian activities over time after the intervention of landscape architects. Other possible investigations could be focused on if role ‘de-militarized’ spaces of play can play a role in benefiting the, mental and physical health of children and youth as well as their attitude towards members of other communities.

Another could be to explore how connect shared public spaces with each other. This could include a further expansion of the idea introduced in the proposal, through evaluation, identification and design of a network of sites which could serve as future locations for a network of small public squares and green spaces. It could also be approached as an investigation into how the development and pedestrian and bicycle routes can be combined with such a network, as to better connect North Belfast with the city centre and their respective shared spaces with each other.

Finally, focusing on studying the nature of the process of collaborative landscape design in this context could possibly also give us a greater understanding on how to operate as landscape architects in contested environments.

6.5 Concluding remarks

This project has been a challenge to me, both ethically and professionally. However it has also been an opportunity for me to engage in a reflective process on the nature of landscape architecture by focusing a rather extreme form of environment. Most of all, it has made me to reflect upon the relationship between landscape architecture and socio-political forces, and endowed me with a recognition of the importance for us as practitioners to be reflective of *whose ideas of landscape* and what political, social and cultural forces we are representing in our work. Both in terms of theoretical foundations, questions of form and function as well as how and with whom we work. As our practice in its current is primarily based on economic forces, I believe these inquiries to be crucial to at least my own professional pride as a landscape architect since; according to me, *justice and equality in the landscape equals quality of the landscape*.



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Interviews

Queens University of Belfast

Frank Gaffikin
Queens Univeristy
Belfast

Interviewed 2013-03-14

Groundwork Northern Ireland

Sonia Harrison
Groundwork NI
Belfast

Sean Brennan
Groundwork NI
Belfast

Interviewed 2013-03-15

Appendix

Questions for Groundworks

1. What role do you think landscape architecture have to play in areas of inter-ethnic conflict?
- 1.1 Can you give any examples?
- 1.2 Can you give any examples in Alexandra and Waterworks Park?
- 1.3 Follow up questions/notes etc.
2. How is your work as a landscape architect affected by inter-cultural conflicts and values?
- 2.1 Can you give any examples?
- 2.2 Can you give any examples in Alexandra and Waterworks Park?
- 2.3 Follow up questions/notes etc.

3. Have you done any cross-community projects in Belfast you're particularly proud of or that you felt were particularly successful with regards to improving cross-community relations?

3.1 If so, why do you think these projects worked so well?

3.2 Follow up questions/notes etc.

4. What is your opinion of Alexandra and Waterworks Park as a professional?

4.1 How are these areas experienced by the different communities?

4.2 Do you see any particular possibilities?

4.3 Are there any particular weaknesses and threats?

4.4 Are there any particular weaknesses and threats?

4.5 Are there any particular opportunities which you feel are un-utilized?

4.6 Follow up questions/notes etc.

5. What do you think is important when working with public parks and greenspace in the Belfast area with regards to the inter-cultural aspect?

6. What do you think is the most important aspects to keep in mind when working with landscape architecture in these areas?

6.1. In general?

6.2. According to the needs of the different communities?

6.3 Is there anything in particular you think landscape architects should avoid?

6.1 Follow up questions/notes etc.

7. What recommendations would you have to landscape architects working in areas where strong inter-ethnic tensions is an aspect?

7.1 Follow up questions/notes etc.

8. How can landscape architecture benefit and provide meetings between different social groups in the landscape in cities with inter-ethnic tensions is an aspect?

8.1 Follow up questions/notes etc.

9. If you could make any changes and improvements of Alexandra Park and Waterworks Park based on you knowledge of the different groups and their specific needs, what would they be?

10. Do you have anything additional to add?

Questions for Mr Frank Gaffikin

1. How do you think it’s possible to aid conflict mitigation through improvement, development and design of public greenspace in Belfast?

1.2 Are there any particular possibilities and/or opportunities with working with green-space in this type of environment?

1.2.1 Follow up questions, examples Notes etc.

1.3 Are there any particular threats or difficulties with working with green-space in this type of environment?

1.4. Follow up questions/notes/examples etc.

2 What do you think is the most important aspects to keep in mind when working with development and design of public green-space in these areas with regards to inter-cultural relations?

2.1. In general?

2.2 Around Alexandra & Waterworks Park?

2.3. According to the needs of the different communities?

2.4. Follow up questions/notes/examples etc.

3. Do you know of any cross-community projects with a focus on green space in Belfast which were particularly successful with regards to improving cross-community relations?

3.2 If so, why do you think these projects worked so well?

3.3. Follow up questions/notes/examples etc.

4. What is your opinion of Alexandra and Waterworks Park as a professional?

4.1 How are these areas experienced by the different communities?

4.2 Do you see any particular possibilities?

4.3 Are there any particular weaknesses and threats?

- 4.4 Are there any particular weaknesses and threats?
- 4.5 Are there any particular opportunities which you feel are un-utilized?
- 4.6 Follow up questions/notes/examples etc.
- 5. What do you think is important when working with public parks and greenspace in the Belfast area with regards to the inter-cultural aspect?

5.1 Follow up questions/notes/examples etc.

- 6. Are there any symbols which are considered as positive by both communities?

- 6.1 Are there any symbols which are particularly important to avoid?

6.2 Follow up questions/notes/examples etc.

- 7 What recommendations would you have to landscape architects and related professions working in areas where strong segregation and inter-ethnic tensions is a problem?

7.1 Follow up questions/notes/examples etc.

- 8 Do you have anything else you would like to ad?