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A MATTER OF SCALES: EXPERIENTIAL EVALUATION AS A CARING PLATFORM ACROSS SCALES

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ABSTRACT

Densification, as a sustainable spatial development strategy, is a matter of care that takes place on multiple scales and is related to liveability in a paradoxical way. In this paper we approach this paradox related to densification as a "matter of scales" and work consciously with the tensions which arise when multiple actors act on multiple scales, such as a lack of communication and mistrust. We analyse and discuss how the participatory design approach of "experiential evaluation" supports this conscious approach by giving form to it as a caring platform around a "matter of scale" by connecting the multiple actors across multiple scales and making the tensions between scales constructive. In the discussion, we present the learnings of the design process and the challenges that we encountered.

1. INTRODUCTION

The research that is the subject of this paper deals with the sustainable spatial development approach of densification, an approach that raises questions and resulting debates across the multiple scales in which policy-making, public discourse and everyday life take place. Densification can be seen as a policy strategy to counter suburbanization of a region and more specifically to reduce the societal costs related to suburbanization. Already since the sixties, there is a public debate in Flanders that discusses the societal costs of low-density suburbanization, in particular the (negative) impact of increasing spatial dispersion (Anselin, 1967; Braem, 1967; Strauven, 1980). Recently this debate is experiencing renewed attention by the clear ambition of the regional government to increase the spatial efficiency and declare a net-development stop by 2040 (Ruimte Vlaanderen, 2016). From that moment onwards, the net-amount of built surface can no longer increase. This means that there can only be a new development if an equally big one is being removed or that existing developments are densified. Densification is thus an actual, ongoing process driven by (economic) forces that go beyond the scope of a neighbourhood, city or region. At the same time, this supra-local debate has impact on a local level, because this "autonomous" densification process (Antrop, 1998) gradually transforms the neighbourhood on the ground. Most small transformations remain unnoticed while some transformations have a more profound impact on the spatial system of the neighbourhood (Antrop, 1998) and can trigger negative reactions by the inhabitants.

Densification is thus a matter of care that takes place on multiple scales and is related to liveability in a paradoxical way: when a neighbourhood is densifying, there are more people, there is more activity, more traffic, more nuisance and thus, potentially, a decrease of the liveability in the neighbourhood. At the same time, the densification might by 2040 lead to the

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opportunity to create more (green) open (public) space beyond the scale of the neighbourhood. This paradox between densification and liveability can be approached as a "matter of scales" (based on the concept "matters of care" by Puig de la Bellacasa (2017)), a concept that together with its implementation in practice will form the centre of discussion in this paper. In this matter of scales, there are multiple actors that act on multiple scales which can lead to tensions based on lack of communication and mistrust. This makes it a difficult and sensitive task for designers and policymakers to initiate a debate with citizens about the "strategic densification" of their neighbourhood: "why do we have to suffer for the benefit of the others?".

In this paper we discuss this "matter of scales" via a case of participatory design in urban planning in the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood in Hasselt, Flanders (Belgium). We worked on this matter of scales from the perspective of densification and more specifically the ambition of the city to densify the neighbourhood, the inhabitants who nearly get out of the neighbourhood, the shop owners who serve a larger part of the city, families who live in other neighbourhoods but their children go to school here, schools with students from the entire province or the ambition to expand the mosque into a religious, educational and multicultural centre. In order to approach this matter of scales as "a generative event" (Whatmore, 2009), we used the methodology of experiential evaluation to co-design a caring platform (Light & Seravalli, 2019). We considered experiential evaluation as a strategy to try to connect all these scales and thus make these tensions related to the matter of scales and the debates around it constructive.

The focus of this participatory design process is not on the participatory development of a new technology, in this case the evaluation tools, but on the exploration of a strategy (experiential evaluation) to foster critical engagement and creative expression (DiSalvo et al., 2013, p. 193). This has the goal to collaboratively imagine the future of the neighbourhood by including the local knowledge and values (DiSalvo et al., 2013, p. 196).

In this paper, we will first define experiential evaluation as a caring platform and the analytical framework. Then we will describe the participatory design process of the case in the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood. Further, we will analyse the case based on four concepts that contextualise a caring platform and specifically how the experiential evaluation helped to make the tensions related the matter of scales constructive. Finally, we discuss to what extent the experiential evaluation could play its role as a caring platform that enables turning the matter of scales into a constructive process generating care for the liveability in the neighbourhood.

2. EXPERIENTIAL EVALUATION AS A CARING PLATFORM

Experiential evaluation can be defined as a methodology for participatory action research that combines formal evaluation methods with everyday practices (Custers et al., 2020). Like in participatory evaluation, in experiential evaluation researchers, experts and inhabitants together decide what the evaluation criteria will be and how the data is collected, analysed and evaluated. Throughout this process the participants make norms and values explicit, develop future scenarios and decide together about further action (Brunner & Guzman, 1989). In participatory evaluation, the people involved in the project, process or program evaluate the project, process or program together with an outsider in order to see if the initial goals are met and/or adjustments need to made. The emphasis is on the evaluation and it is accomplished through a collaboration of the researcher and local practitioners (Fawcett et al., 2003).
In experiential evaluation is also a participatory process organised to co-create a future scenario for a liveable neighbourhood. However, it adds an experiential aspect in order to make the evaluation process more tangible in everyday life based on the assumption that if the people can experience a test set-up in their everyday life it can lead to a more engaged evaluation.
The experience of a new possible future enables the participants to make value trade-offs and change their perspective on the issue or position in the process. The evaluation moments triggers reflection about what they value and prioritise. The evaluation and the experience are thus intensely intertwined in the process of experiential evaluation and can enable collective learning in a participatory planning process (Albrechts et al., 2020).

The research that we describe in this paper will particularly explore how we can use experiential evaluation to co-design a caring platform to make a "matter of scales" constructive. A caring platform is defined as socio-technical structures that support the welfare of citizens and can enhance "relations of reciprocal accountability and mutual commitment and which encourages reflexive engagement among citizens (caring) (Light & Seravalli, 2019)". The definition of a caring platform is related to the articulation of the relationship between co-design, co-learning and care. This is a complex relationship and a mutual caring relationship is not an automatic outcome of co-design process. The co-design process can be instrumental to the co-learning as this co-learning can be seen as a product that emerges alongside a design activity (Light & Seravalli, 2019)
The co-design of a caring platform is foremost contextual as it is affected by the people, values, tools and action in that specific context (Light & Seravalli, 2019). Therefore, we will use these four aspects to analyse the process of the experiential evaluation and to

define the relationship between co-design, co-learning and care that is constructed (or not) in this specific case. What we precisely want to learn is how the experiential evaluation not only enables value trade-offs and initiates co-learning but also can change the relations between the different actors in the neighbourhood. Can this change in relations turn a participatory design process into a caring platform in which a sensitive "matter of scales" can be dealt with in a constructive way?

3. THE CASE

We developed the methodology of experiential evaluation within a participatory design project that we facilitated in the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood; a neighbourhood located close to the city centre of Hasselt, the capital of the province of Limburg in Flanders. The participatory process started in August 2018 and ran until the end of January 2020 (see Figure 1). The Heilig-Hart neighbourhood is surrounded by a railway station in the south, a larger ring road in the west and north and a former industrial site (in transformation to a residential area) and a smaller ring road in the east. The morphology of the neighbourhood is diverse: detached-houses, row houses, apartment blocks and services with a clientele beyond the scope of the neighbourhood.

The process is part of a bigger participatory project "Werke naan Wijken" (Dutch for "Working on Neighbourhoods") and is formalized in a contract between UHasselt and the city of Hasselt. The assignment is to organize collective learning processes in three neighbourhoods during which the city policy, the city departments, designers, citizens and stakeholders collaboratively learn how to cope with the tensions between spatial planning processes, such as densification, and participatory processes. For the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood we had to address the tension between an ongoing and planned densification process and the concern among inhabitants on the impact of this process on liveability. More specifically, the question of the city's policy was to approach this tension from the perspective of mobility.

3.1 MOBILITY

The Heilig-Hart neighbourhood is a neighbourhood in transformation: there is a large urban development that will double the population in the neighbourhood; there might be a new high-speed light rail implemented in the next few years; there are the ambitions to expand the mosque to a religious, educational and multicultural centre; the church needs a new future and the city is planning to redevelop the area around the train station. All these projects have an impact on the mobility and thus the liveability of the neighbourhood, but there is uncertainty about which projects will be realized, how they will be realized and what the actual impact will be on the mobility? This uncertainty became so big that inhabitants started to speculate: "there will be traffic jams from morning till evening"; "we will not find a parking space anymore"; "why would the city allow such a project if the situation is already so bad". These speculations triggered the idea that the city was no longer in control of all the densification processes and the inhabitants started to question them ("they have no overall vision"; "they just allow projects in one neighbourhood without thinking of the impact in other neighbourhoods") leading to misunderstandings and mistrust between the city policy and the inhabitants.

The mobility situation in the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood is indeed complex: there are quite some functions that generate traffic, such as schools; the neighbourhood is situated between important traffic lines and it is located close to the train station. There is thus a large diversity of mobility users with each their own rhythm, intensity and needs. In addition, there is a problem of traffic that uses the neighbourhood as a shortcut to travel to the city centre.

Mobility was already an issue before the participatory process started. Early 2018, the mobility department gave an assignment to an engineering office to analyse the mobility situation in the neighbourhood and formulate scenarios to improve this situation. The inhabitants and representatives of two schools were consulted in four focus groups. Around that same period, the parent committees of three primary schools in the neighbourhood organized a questionnaire to gain insight in the safety perception in the school environment. The questionnaire was initiated by a few parents, not only out of a concern about the mobility situation at the school environment but also in the entire neighbourhood. The results indicated that there is not only a safety issue in the school environment but also that there is a large support among the inhabitants for structurally changing the mobility situation. To make this public, the parent committees of two schools together with the NGO "Fietsfront Hasselt" decided to organize an annual "kidical mass". This is a collective bike ride to strive for more safety, space and attention for young cyclists and pedestrians.

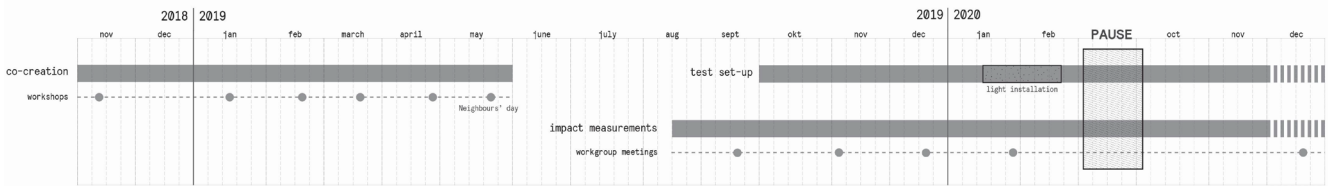

Figure 1: overview process

In parallel, a group of concerned inhabitants started an action committee and asked the city to be involved in the planning process of their neighbourhood in order to change the mobility situation and increase liveability. The complexity of the mobility situation and the ongoing initiatives made it clear to us that we could not limit our participatory process to developing a mobility plan on the scale of the neighbourhood. We noticed the tensions between different narratives of multiple actors and ambitions on different scales: the ambition of the region to densify, the ambition of the city to work on mobility, the ambition of the mosque to increase accessibility, the ambition of different parent committees in schools to give form to a city that is "cyclist friendly", the ambition of neighbourhood committees to contribute to a liveable place to live… These ambitions and some tensions between them coincided with the belief of certain actors that these ambitions stand in each other's way and that this belief was based on a historical mistrust. This required an approach which combined different tools in order to connect the multiple scales and actors in the neighbourhood to make the tensions of a "matter of scales" constructive. The experiential evaluation started with the co-creation of an alternative scenario for the neighbourhood mobility plan, we then implemented one part of this alternative scenario in the neighbourhood via a test set-up and we collaboratively measured and evaluated the impact of the test set-up on mobility.

3.2 THE CO-CREATION OF A MOBILITY SCENARIO

We started the participatory design process with the co-creation of an alternative scenario for the neighbourhood mobility plan, in support of addressing the paradoxical effects of a densification process, during five workshops with inhabitants and representatives of the mobility department from November 2018 until May 2019 (see Figure 2). It is this alternative mobility plan that we used in the experiential evaluation.
In the first workshop we mapped what we valued in the neighbourhood: what is a liveable neighbourhood? In what kind of neighbourhood do I want to wake up in the future? We also made a map of all the projects (in realisation and planned) and bottlenecks in the neighbourhood. In the second workshop, we evaluated the neighbourhood mobility plan made by the engineering office by mapping the impact of this plan on the everyday routes (car and bicycle) that the inhabitants take to go in and out of the neighbourhood. This resulted in three alternative mobility scenarios. We assessed these scenarios with the alderman and experts from the mobility and urban planning department of the city. We presented this expert judgement on the third workshop as a series of posters on which inhabitants could vote pro and against and comment on the different scenarios and assessments via sticky notes. The two preferred scenarios were presented at the fourth workshop. This time we asked the participants to evaluate the scenarios on the basis of accessibility (car, bicycle), safety (pedestrian, cyclists and car drivers) and livelihood (green space, air quality and noise nuisance). We divided them in four groups and each group had to further detail the scenarios for one particular location. After the fourth session we discussed the preferred scenario in depth with each collective separately (the action committee, the parent committees and the shop owners). These discussions resulted in three variants of the preferred scenario. In the last workshop we asked the participants to prototype and evaluate these three variants. We decided to end our co-creation process by presenting the final scenario on the "Neighbours' day" (see Figure 3). This is a yearly event that takes place at different locations in the neighbourhood. Together with the neighbourhood committees, we agreed to organize it as one big collective event on the square that played a crucial role in the alternative mobility scenario. This

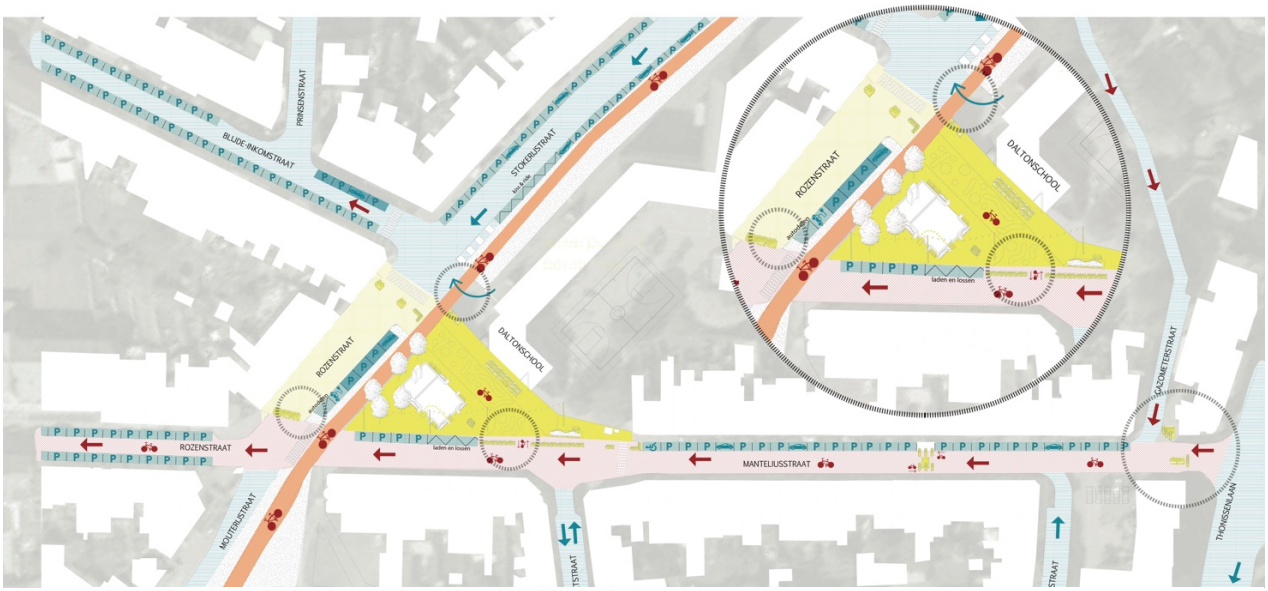

Figure 2: alternative scenario for the neighbourhood mobility plan

allowed the inhabitants to see the plan in the actual space and resulted in a final round of comments.

Figure 3: Neighbours' Day at the central square

4. EXPERIENTIAL EVALUATION OF THE ALTERNATIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD MOBILITY PLAN

The co-creation phase resulted in an alternative neighbourhood mobility plan. It was part of our original agreement with the city that we would gradually test this plan on different locations in the neighbourhood: implement a first test set-up, evaluate it, make adaptations if necessary and then proceed to the next phase.

Figure 4: test set-up at the central square

4.1 TEST SET-UP

The first test set-up was installed by the city at the beginning of October 2019 and is still in place until today. In this test set-up we blocked two segments of streets around a central square where one school was situated, to enlarge it (see Figure 4). We changed the directions of one-way streets and turned two-way streets into one-way streets (see Figure 2). In January 2020, we added a "schoolstreet" to another school in the neighbourhood, which implies that traffic around the main entrance of the school is blocked during the start and end of the school day and we made a necessary change in the circulation based on an intermediate evaluation.

4.2 IMPACT MEASUREMENTS

During the fifth workshop of the co-creation phase we developed a "measurement plan" together with the mobility department and the participants. We decided collaboratively what we wanted to measure, how we would measure it, what the strategic locations are to measure and when the measurements would take place. We decided upon a range of data-collection tools: traffic counts (1), Telraam (Dutch for "counting window") (2), online questionnaire (3) and permanent feedback (4). The traffic counts (1) were measurements that the city organized at around twenty locations across the neighbourhood (see Figure 6). Over a period of two weeks, they registered the amount and the speed of traffic (cyclists and motorized traffic). The traffic counts were conducted in September 2019 before the test set-up was in place as a reference measurement, and November 2019 to measure the impact. Telraam (2) is a citizen science project that was used and actively promoted by the neighbourhood during this evaluation process. It is a small device that has to be installed at a window on the first floor of a house (see Figure 7). The device measures the amount of the traffic (pedestrians, cyclists, cars and larger vehicles) and the speed of the cars during daytime. The data is visualized on a website where everyone can access it. There was a network of 24 Telramen active in the neighbourhood a month before the test set-up started and provided a continuous measurement of the situation. The city also organized an online questionnaire (3) a month after the test set-up was in place to give everybody enough time to adapt to the new situation. With this questionnaire it was possible for inhabitants and visitors of the neighbourhood to evaluate the test set-up based upon their personal and direct experience. At any time, it was possible for everybody to give personal feedback (4) via email to the mobility department.

4.3 WORKGROUP

We organized together with the city an open call for inhabitants and shop owners to apply to become a representative in the workgroup in August 2019. The selection of the representatives was based on the network of the candidate as well as the location of the network in the neighbourhood in order to constitute a group of representatives that more or less covers the entire neighbourhood. The aim of the workgroup is to evaluate the test set-up and advise the city policy based upon this evaluation. It is on the basis of the advice of this group that the city policy will finally decide whether the test set-up will stay in place (and evolve to a permanent situation), that there will be adjustments made or that we will return to the original situation.

The first meeting of the workgroup took place mid-September 2019 to discuss the implementation of the

test set-up and the measurements. Early November 2019 was the second meeting of the workgroup to discuss the first results of the measurements, the experiences of the inhabitants, schools and shops presented by the representatives and the draft of the online questionnaire. In the third meeting, one month later, evaluated the workgroup the test set-up based on the results of the measurements and decided to keep it in place but to make some necessary adjustments and to add a "schoolstreet". The fourth meeting was organized at the end of January 2020 to discuss the impact of the adjustments. In this meeting the workgroup decided to pause the process because there were a lot of road and construction works going on in the neighbourhood and the first phase of the large development would soon be realized which all had an impact on the mobility. If there would be extra adjustments implemented, this would mean that there would be even more uncertainty and thus less support for the process. The last meeting of the workgroup was in December 2020. The city again conducted traffic counts in October 2020 to measure the impact of the test set-up after this uncertain period and take into account a new uncertainty, the COVID-19 pandemic. The workgroup discussed new adjustments, the possibility to transform the central square in a qualitative meeting place with space for more green. They also decided to keep on meeting once a year to keep on evaluating the situation in the neighbourhood.

5. EXPERIENTIAL EVALUATION AS A CARING PLATFORM

As we discussed in the theoretical section, the co-design of a caring platform in a specific context is affected by four aspects: action, tools, values and people in that context (Light & Seravalli, 2019). Therefore, we will use these four aspects to analyse the case of the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood in order to discuss to what extent the experiential evaluation as a caring platform helped to turn a "matter of scales" constructive.

5.1 ACTION

The test set-up is an invasive action in the public space which has an effect on a complete mobility system, not only including the everyday life of the inhabitants living and working around the set-up, but also of those far beyond (visitors, clientele of the shops, the ones that take the shortcut to the city centre, parents that bring their kids to school). We move around every day and we can choose how we move (by foot, cycle, car, public transport…). When we are forced to change this individual behaviour, it will make us question this behaviour and maybe leads to more sustainable choices (Marres, 2015). This individual behaviour that happens in the public space defines the use of this space to a large extent. This means that when the mobility in a certain space changes, it can also change the use of the space. This change is most visible at the central square in the neighbourhood. After the installation of the test set-up, the square is used as a meeting place and a playground for children after school hours. The rediscovery of the square was celebrated with a light installation that we placed on the square during a month mid-January 2020 and was accompanied with a "winter walk" for children organized by the parent committees of two schools together with the action committee with the support of the shop owners and the city (see Figure 5). This action emphasises the change in the positions of the different actors and the shift in the process from mere car accessibility to liveability. It shows that the square is not an abstract space but a co-constructed and political space (Light & Miskelly, 2019).

Figure 5: light installation during the winter walk

The implementation of the test set-up not only created the possibility to experience the alternative scenario on a 1:1 scale but more importantly it also made the impact on the multiple scales tangible. It shows the importance of caring for multiple scales (and the actors associated with them) at the same time: changing the mobility on the scale of the neighbourhood, but also the future redevelopment of a square and the adaptation of a school environment.

5.2 TOOLS

In order to evaluate the test set-up, we had to measure the impact on the mobility in the neighbourhood. These impact measurements were a crucial part of the experiential evaluation because by the end of the co-creation phase, it was clear that the prototyping and the qualitative approach to discuss the alternative scenario was not working for all the groups and even further increased tensions instead of making them productive. We used this moment to support the different groups in using the tools they wanted to use to generate data for the impact measurements. The traffic counts as a common tool of the mobility department were opened up as the approach for the inhabitants and the results were discussed with the representatives of the inhabitants and stakeholders (see Figure 6). The action committee used Telramen as a way to collect their data (see Figure 7). Therefore, the committee added fifteen Telramen to the network, in addition to the nine that were made available by the city, to create a denser

network. They contacted the organisation behind Telramen to ask for the unprocessed data, made suggestions to optimise the data collection process and did tests to install the device outside the house. The online questionnaire was initiated by the mobility department but developed in collaboration with the workgroup.

This collaborative data collection as a way of "joint fact-finding" gave the different scales not only the possibility to use their own tools to collect their data but also made it possible to exchange and explain their data and thus create common knowledge and understanding of the complexity and uncertainty of mobility (Ehrmann & Stinson, 1999). Also, a test set-up showed how a certain mobility plan can improve the liveability at multiple scales. The tools also helped the multiple actors to get familiar with each other's knowledge production processes and to reason on scales that they are not used to (Whatmore, 2009): an action committee measures traffic in a way the a city normally does and the city involves citizens in the evaluation of this data and had to adapt their modus operandus to make this feasible. It was an important step in our attempt to create a caring platform that can cross scales and engage them in the collaborative decision-making process (Matsuura & Schenk, 2017).The joint fact-finding provided a common language between the different actors in the participatory process. This does not mean that they will agree upon every aspect. However, they will speak a technical and/or scientific language understood and developed by multiple actors which helps them to start to rebuild trust (Matsuura & Schenk, 2017).


Figure 6: traffic counts


Figure 7: Telraam set-up

5.3 VALUES

In the first workshop of the co-creation phase, we defined with the participants what they value in the neighbourhood, in what kind of neighbourhood they want to wake up in the future and what is important for the mobility in the neighbourhood. The values were defined as livelihood (public space, air quality, noise nuisance, green), safety (car, pedestrian, cyclists) and accessibility (car, cyclists and public transport). We used these values as evaluation criteria in the process for the expert judgement in workshop three, to evaluate the scenarios in workshop four and as a basis for the online questionnaire. The values were defined in a very general way but throughout the process it became clear how different (groups of) inhabitants interpreted the values in different ways. For example, in a discussion about the online questionnaire between two representatives of different inhabitant groups: one representative defined a liveable neighbourhood strictly as a place to live and all the other uses were subordinate to that, while another representative had a broader view and stated that also the shops and the schools are necessary for the liveability of the neighbourhood and need to be supported.

The experience of the test set-up made the inhabitants not only question their own mobility behaviour but also triggered them to make value trade-offs between their individual values and the liveability of the neighbourhood. For example, an inhabitant stated in an email directed to the mobility department that he shifted from a severe opponent of the test set-up because made his house less accessible for the car toward an advocate because the square in front of his house is now a quieter public space. We tried at different moments in the co-creation phase to let the participants make these trade-offs but it was only when they could actually experience an alternative reality that they made these direct trade-offs. The test set-up has ensured that the central square became a quieter place that is used as a meeting place and playground after school hours. This added value was not defined by the participants in the co-creation phase. The collective experience of the new situation leads to a more engaged and constructive evaluation of the situation and helps the participants to take other values and thus scales into account.

5.4 PEOPLE

The workgroup, which was installed after the co-creation phase and before the test set-up was implemented, consisted of representatives of the inhabitants, the shop owners and the two schools in the neighbourhood together with the alderman, the experts of the city's mobility department and neighbourhood management department and the researchers. At the start of the first meeting, the alderman defined the workgroup as "an arena of dialogue". The workgroup meetings created the opportunity for people active at all scales to communicate directly with each other and

exchange knowledge. This dialogue was crucial to gain trust and mutual understanding at all sides of the table. They became partners in the same process and in that way, it was a successful experiment in the politicisation of the decision-making process.
Nevertheless, we know that one representative had a separate meeting with the alderman to discuss the concern about a more thorough test set-up as a next phase in the process which the mobility department was currently developing based on the alternative scenario. The alderman shared the concern of this representative and therefore this proposal for a more thorough test set-up was not discussed during the next meeting of the workgroup.

Although everybody could apply to be a representative in the workgroup and we contacted stakeholders directly, there were still actors who were not represented. First, there is the clientele of "Café Anoniem" (Dutch for "Café Anonymous"), NGO that provides services for homeless people. Their clientele was already using the central square as a meeting place because it is located close to the Café. Another actor is the mosque. The representative of the mosque attended several workshops, but they decided not to be directly involved in the test set-up, although it changed the accessibility of the mosque. We could have kept these actors more involved in the process by for example providing them with tools that fit their needs or engage in their practices and thus did not connect them with the other actors across scales.

6. DISCUSSION

In this paper we discussed the experiential evaluation of an alternative mobility scenario in the context of the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood. What did we learn as design researchers during the process about how experiential evaluation can be such a caring platform that enables us to negotiate in constructive ways on a "matter of scale"? What did we learn from the action, tools, values and people and the relation between co-design, co-learning and care? Did we design for care and co-designed a caring platform? Did the experiential evaluation enables value trade-offs and initiated co-learning? Was there a change in the relation between the different actors in the neighbourhood?
We will share some reflections, in order to answer the above questions.

6.1 A CARING PLATFORM FOR A "MATTER OF SCALES" PROVIDES ROOM FOR EXPERIMENTATION AND ADAPTATION

The experiential evaluation process as a caring platform was made of experimentation and adaptation. We started the participatory design process from the perspective of mobility, because this was already taken care of by actors individually. We brought these actors together in the experiential evaluation which led to a shared accountability and co-ownership as they cared to work together (Light & Seravalli, 2019) which meant that we as design researchers had to start working across different scales and diversify our approach. For example, we had to moderate the strong voice of the action committee throughout the process. To facilitate that, we had to organise parallel meetings with the different actors in order to give them the possibility to equally contribute to the final scenario. This experience shows that there needs to be room for experimentation and adaptation of the process. Indeed, the bridging across scales sometimes required to slow down the process and create opportunities for a different awareness or approach of the issue (Whatmore, 2009).

6.2 A CARING PLATFORM PROVIDES ROOM FOR A PLURALITY OF ACTORS, BOTH INSIDE AND BETWEEN GROUPS

The process as a caring platform provided space for a plurality of actors and groups and was flexible enough for changes in group constellations. An example is the action committee that was persistent in their belief that there was only one solution for the mobility issue even after they had the possibility to discuss it with the alderman at the workgroup and it was clear that it was not feasible in the short term. It kept them from making value trade-offs and acknowledging other positive impacts on liveability beyond their proposed solution. This persistence of mainly representatives of the group not only led to a change of representative in the workgroup after the second meeting, but also in the board and position of the action committee. Today the group presents itself as a citizen initiative with a focus on liveability and no longer as an action committee related to mobility. This indicates that there is not only a plurality of different groups of actors, but also within one group (DiSalvo et al., 2013).

6.3 A CARING PLATFORM PROVIDES ROOM FOR A PLURALITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND TOOLS FOR KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

The experiential evaluation as a caring platform brought different forms of knowledge together: knowledge foregrounded as being objective and subjective, knowledge from inhabitants and experts, from outsiders and inhabitants. Within the process we provided the multiple actors with different tools to make their own knowledge visible and created a place (the workgroup) to exchange and discuss their knowledge with others. This co-learning process allowed them to bridge scales by building a common language and trust. The collaborative evaluation of the test set-up based on the experience provided a means of reflection in the co-design process. It was only when the different actors could actually experience an alternative future via the test set-up that they made trade-offs between values and changed their positions. This made the process a co-designed learning project (Light & Seravalli, 2019) across scales and actors. Indeed, the test set-up at the central square is now a new meeting place. Multiple

actors start to care about it: organizing a Winter Walk but also asking the city to redesign the square to enhance this new use and maybe other future uses. The city starts to take care of it via small adaptations over time. Also, the shop owners experience the added value of having a new meeting place in front of their shops.

6.4 A CARING PLATFORM PROVIDES ROOM FOR EXCHANGE BETWEEN ACTORS ACROSS SCALES CO-DEFINING THE PUBLIC REALM

The co-design of the caring platform enhanced the exchanges of knowledge, experiences and practices across scales providing the possibility to re-engage with each other and define new relations within the complexity of the contemporary public realm and can be defined as a form of "institutioning" (Huybrechts et al., 2017). The experiential evaluation lead to a shared accountability and a sense of co-ownership, which in itself is a form of caring to create the opportunity to work together. The workgroup that was created to evaluate the measurements changed the relation between the inhabitants and the local authority: from mistrust to a politicisation of the decision-making process. What does not mean that all the actors agreed upon every decision, in fact the representative of the action committee left the work group because he disagreed with the decisions that were made.
It indeed bridged the different scales between inhabitants, public and private institutions by enhancing the communication, providing means of reflection and opportunities to share practices (exchanging knowledge and tools) makes the process of the experiential evaluation a co-designed learning project (Light & Seravalli, 2019).

6.5 A CARING PLATFORM OFFERS SPACE FOR ACTORS TO EXIT THE PROCESS

In the fourth meeting of the workgroup (January 2020) we, as being part of the university, announced that our assignment ended at that time and that the mobility department would be in charge of the process. It was in the same meeting that the workgroup decided to pause the process providing a real risk that the process would end. Nevertheless, the caring platform proved to keep on doing its work across scales, because the workgroup did meet again in December 2020, to discuss the follow-up on data measurements conducted by the mobility department, new changes in the mobility situation and a specific request to redesign the central square with more space for green. They also decide that they would keep on meeting at least once a year and thus "infrastructuring" this caring platform (Karasti, 2014)

6.6 A CARING PLATFORM FOR WHO?

The caring platform connects multiple scales between multiple actors, but we did not succeed to keep all the actors on board during the process. The clientele of "Café Anoniem" and the mosque are not represented in the workgroup and we were not able to connect them with the test set-up although this action also intervened in their everyday practices. We did not manage to provide them with tools that fit their needs or engage in their practices in order to keep them engaged in the process. Ideally, we would create room in the design process for the workgroup to reflect on their aim and principles during the process: Do we need to map other issues? Collect other data? Do we need to involve other actors? The flexibility of the current process has proved to have many advantages: it provides room for adaptation and experimentation. At the same time, it also leaves room to discuss individual concerns with the alderman instead of making them explicit during a meeting of the workgroup. It is a trade-off between flexibility and openness versus transparency with a real risk that it threatens the democratic character of the workgroup.

7. CONCLUSION

We presented densification as an issue that plays at multiple scales with a challenge to bring together multiple actors that act and think on multiple scales. With experiential evaluation we created a caring platform to cope with a "matter of scales" in the Heilig-Hart neighbourhood. Thinking of the experiential evaluation model as a caring platform supported not to see it as a linear process that starts with a question and ends with a set of answers, but rather as a flexible and pluriversal process. It became a process in which multiple actors were in charge, defining the values important to them, mastering the tools closest to their interests to re-negotiate these values with others, inhabiting a space in which conversations could take place asynchronously between scales, and finally taking a space temporarily, with the possibility to leave whenever the actors felt the need. Nevertheless, we should also recognise the possible weaknesses in this process. Not all the actors are always represented equally in the process, since the flexibility and asynchronicity of the process also offers possibilities to prioritise values of particular actors over others. This forces us to always consider the question related to the democratic aspect of the process: whose caring platform is it or does it need to be?

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