The Future Zoo

Reflection

Pim de Haas
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Relationship between research and design

In my graduation project, has been mostly structured design by research. I have worked in three stages analysis, synthesis and application stage. In the analysis stage consteted of three segments data collection, additional data collection and analysis of the data and a literature study in to various field concerning the future zoo. These analysis stage led to the synthesis stage, in which the collected information was gathered and transformed into a tool to evaluated current zoos and future zoos by using different parameters. Out of this tool and the previous analysis stage guidelines, requirements and opportunities for the future zoo were formulated on three field. Objectives of the future zoo, urban connection of the future zoo and spatial characteristics of the future zoo. These guidelines, requirements and opportunities have been tested in the application stage of the design. The design serves to test the proposed guidelines, which had been transformed into design principles, as well as show a spatial possibility of an future zoo. Now conclusion can be drawn by using the tool again to see if the designed zoo really is a future zoo in the urban environment or if this aim not has been reached or only partially.

The research done in to different themes of the future zoo gave both expected results as surprising ones. Expected result where of course the great concern for animal welfare the future zoo will have to oblige too to be ethically feasible. Surprising insides were found in the relation between zoo and city and especially the spatial relation within the urban fabric. Before the research and analysis, it had not occurred to me that the spatial relation between the zoo and city was so weak and often completely blocked off, forming gated communities within the urban environment. Although are often not perceived as such. This inside gave opportunities to establish guidelines for improvement in the future zoo. By working with first strong emphases on research I had found out that there has been quit an amount of literature and research done into the zoos history, conservation and animal welfare. But the research concerning the zoo and the urban environment is very limited. At this point more research could have been given towards the park surrounding the zoo and urban metabolism of the zoo would have been an interesting opportunity which has not been explored. The network in which the zoo operates hasn’t been research into depth at the moment but offers great opportunities, especially conserving food, waste, heat and local biodiversity. Guidelines for the future zoo have been formulated, but more is always possible. Especially in the chose making for certain aspects and components of the tool could be better established by the use of scientific sources. Further the research into the future zoo has been primarily into the zoo itself and its inner working and less in its relation to the large recreation and education network it is part of in the city and region. Although in the case study design demands and wishes form the local municoplality have been taken into consideration. In general the tool and guidelines have allowed for stronger urban connection suggestion, but not at how these would influence the cultural and recreational infrastructure of the city.

My research has mainly been conducted by literary studies, data analysis, comparisons, mapping of elements, fieldtrips, visits zoos digitally by website and video as well as watching future zoo conferences online.
The literary study has been mainly focused on history, ethics of captivity, animal welfare and conservation, zoo architecture and exhibit design. This has given me insight on how the zoo has developed and what the ethical debate, future challenges and opportunities are for the future zoo. At this moment the design has not been visualised in the report good enough, but this will be done during the presentation. The mapping, data analysis, comparisons, digital visits and fieldtrips has to help me better with the design and the guidelines and also have expanded my frame of reference for when I started designing.

My primarily design by research relationship within my project has given me the ground rules for my design. Although this research hasn’t always produced useful results, sometimes much time spend on not that significant elements for the design of the future zoo. Further the design has been constantly changing in the last month as did the structure of the report which over the last few month as changed a couple of times.

**What would you do different the next time**

First of all, I have greatly underestimated my ability to put my ideas and finding onto paper. Currently I can tell you everything about the future zoo but I can’t write it down (fast enough). I have never liked writing. I find that with my dyslexia I’m very bad at is, especially in making good sentences. When writing I often think faster than I can type making putting this proper down om paper quiet a hassle. Since I do not like to write and would much reader research or design I have postpone putting stuff in to writing because I would rather do the things I like about the graduation project. But currently I find myself and a wall or cliff. I feel I will never succeed in writing down what I know to my own fulfilment or yours as tutors.

Further looking back an adjustment would be to set clearer goals where I want to go in my research and design working more structured. I currently strongly have the feeling that my research and design are going more and more all over the place. I have very much been struggling with how to ordered the analysis, literature and report and then combining them back together in to a spatial design. Therefore, I’m losing direction within my research and design. Which is consuming a lot of unnecessary time and work. Likewise, when designing I work a little in this space and in that space. Not following any clear design structure or approach. With the guidelines, always present in the back of my mind but not as a rule book next to me, giving me some structure.

Also, I really would have wanted to do some interviews. Input with expert interviews would have made it possible to discuss the tool, guidelines and design for the future zoo with experts in practices. There advise or ideas would have developed the project a lot further especially with more practical information of the running of zoos, one not easily encounters doing research by my methods.

In making a planning for my thesis a still need to plan more carefully, as I’m still too optimistic about what can be done in 24 hours. Often this is worsened by that I sometimes put a lot of effort in non-significant thinks will not thinking of the larger picture.