

05. LILAC Design Workshop



context & approach



Context

This design took place within the context of Design 03 LILAC Landscaping. The schematic diagram from that design on the next page shows how this one focuses on part of the set-up phase of that project. For a fuller understanding of this design, it should be read in conjunction with Design 03.

This project sought to design and deliver a workshop to consult LILAC members on our shared landscape assets and involve them in the design process in a meaningful way.

This design also relates to Design 04 LILAC Landscape Team as preparation for, and attendance at this workshop were some of the next steps for the team that was formed as an outcome of that design.

Approach

I wanted a quick and simple approach for this design. As I was designing a one-off workshop I didn't need to consider maintenance or tweaks, so used SADI – with some evaluation at the end.

Elinor places trees on the base map during the design exercise

survey

Aims/Functions of the workshop

Some functions inherited from design 03

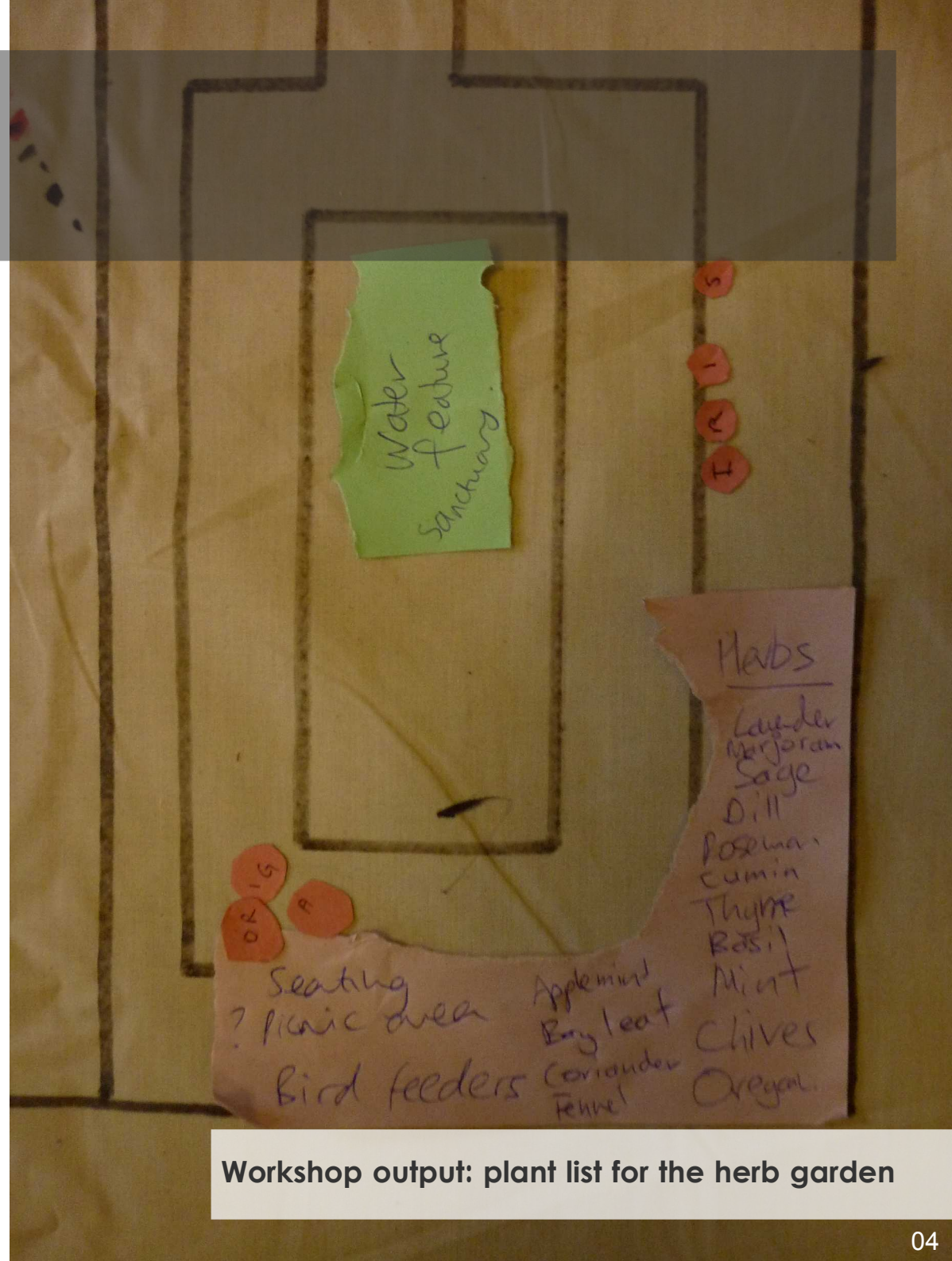
LILAC Landscaping:

- Empower members
- Create a shared vision
- Members to understand legal constraints/planning obligations
- Develop designs for each zone
- Members learn about permaculture & develop design skills
- Promote plant knowledge sharing
- Have fun and create community glue/social capital

Functions specific to this design

- Add detail to the planting plan
- Sanity check/tweak plan
- Support production of site management plan

These functions can be distilled into a simpler set of aims. See over.



Workshop output: plant list for the herb garden

survey

Aims of Workshop

1. Include newer members in landscape design process
2. Revisit/re-state our Landscape vision
3. Sanity check/tweak planting plan accordingly
4. Add detail to planting plan
5. Support development of site management plan
6. Have fun and build community glue/social capital

Supporting information

- Project documentation (see design 04 Landscape Team Appendix A – D)
- Original landscape vision – i.e. earlier membership visioning documents

Audience

- Potentially all LILAC members
- Diverse along several axes

Logistics

- Date & Time: performed Doodle. Best time is 1pm – 6 pm, Sunday 18/09/2011
- Venue: Hollybush is available & free of charge; Friends meeting house is available but charges a modest fee.
- Food & refreshments: LILAC doesn't have a stash of teabags, biscuits & milk
- Child care – some members would like to bring children to participate in parts of the workshops, but not the “boring bits”.
- Likely resource requirements: flip-chart/white board, markers, laptop & projector, scrap paper, pens, scissors, post-it notes.

analysis

Aims

I performed a brainstorm on the desired aims (both workshop aims and supporting aims – see over) to summarise candidate options and highlight what I thought were key considerations. I didn't perform in-depth analysis on each option, rather worked more intuitively once I'd gathered all my thoughts.

Workshop aims & possible methods (functions & elements)

Workshop Aim (function)	Possible method (elements)
1. Include newer members in landscape design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Recap story of how we got here•Review planting plan•Review project constraints•Site visit
2. Revisit/re-state landscape vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Dream Circle (from Dragon Dreaming)•Visioning exercise "Consensus workshop" method (From ICA)
3. Sanity check/tweak planting plan accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Site visit•Review planting plan•Review project constraints
4. Add detail to planting plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Review project constraints•Review site constraints (e.g. sector analysis)•Placement exercise on large base map: "panning for real life"
5. Support development of site management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Invite volunteers to help
6. Have fun & build community glue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Tea breaks/eating together•By-product of spending time together & shared activities•Keep workshop light

analysis

Supporting aims (support participation & smooth running of workshop)

Supporting Aim (function)	Aspects	Possible methods, approaches, considerations
Physical Accessibility	Venue location	Public transport, cycling, lift-share, parking, secure cycle storage?
	Venue access	Ramps, level access, induction loop?
Physical safety	Fire	Check exits & muster point; inform attendees during housekeeping
	Other hazards	Risk assessment (formal vs. informal)
Physical comfort	Temperature	Heating system/air con – understand controls?
	Ventilation	Windows, doors, air con. Noise pollution issues?
	Refreshments	Water freely available to all at all times
		Range of hot drinks (including decaf & herbal options)
		Inclusive snacks (vegan-friendly, emergency carbs for diabetics)
	Toilets	Clean, accessible, ample toilet roll supply. Announce location early.
Enable everyone to see & hear	Seating layout	Circle, horseshoe (lip reading in groups); theatre for single speaker?
	A.V. equipment	P.A. System needed? Laptop speakers? Projector big/bright enough?
	Hand signals	Speak louder!
Enable everyone to speak	Early go-round	Sets precedent and gives everyone equal 'permission' to speak
Emotional safety	Ground rules	Ask group to determine them; gives ownership & increases buy-in
Access to required resources	Paper & pens	Scrap paper, pens, pencils, post-it notes & markers always available

analysis

Supporting information

I performed a quick and easy PMI on the key information resources that I thought we needed for the day. To the PMI I added an A for action, which is arguably spilling over into the design phase...

Information resource	Plus	Minus	Interesting	Action
Original landscape vision (represents less than half current group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Gives context•Shows/honours work done so far	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Reviewing detail could prejudice thinking of new members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Could be a unifying or divisive element depending how it is treated	Don't bring; create collective narrative instead.
Planting plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Foundation of design•Core document•Essential resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•A bit small for a large group to work on	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•A lot of room for manoeuvre in the detail	Bring as is; create a scaled up base map from it for designing on
Planning constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Gives clear boundaries to what we can & can't do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Not very accessible•Lots of irrelevant info that could confuse folk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Can be easily summarised into 1 sheet of A4	Bring a summary of salient points
CSH recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Gives us clear direction on how to improve ecological value of site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Document is not very accessible;•useful information spread out all over the place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Can be easily summarised into 1 sheet of A4	Bring a summary of key points
Tree constraints plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Clear & unambiguous•Concise & accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Buried in appendix 6 of Arboricultural report		Bring as is

analysis

Audience

I wanted to profile the audience to analyse how they might influence or be influenced by the workshop. I used a SWOT analysis on the 'community zones' that I had defined in design 03 [LILAC Landscaping](#).

Zone	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Zone 00 (me)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Access to most information•Design & facilitation skills & experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Single point of failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Can recruit some help with the site management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Could forget or miss something important
Zone 0: Area coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Already engaged•Prepared for meeting•Advance knowledge of planting plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Few Permaculture design skills•Limited time to prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Can act as design authority for their area•Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Power & authority without design skills or principles is a risk.•May be unprepared
Zone 1: Landscape team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Already engaged•Advance knowledge of planting plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Less committed if in team but not area coordinator?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Gain context & oversight of design•Help with site management plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Possible lack of commitment could lead to unmet responsibilities
Zone 2: LILAC membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Lots of capacity•Enthusiasm•Knowledge & skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Less informed about landscape project so far	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Can lend capacity, knowledge & skills•Inclusion & empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Random or inappropriate design suggestions
Zone 3: DG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Good understanding of planning conditions, budgetary constraints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Need reassurance that we'll respect constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•A chance to build their confidence that project is in safe hands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•May intervene if anxious: this could set damaging precedent

analysis

Logistics: Date & Time

The workshop is due to start at 1pm on Sunday. This could clash with people's Sunday lunch plans. Options:

1. Push back start time
 - Pros: less likelihood of complaints
 - Cons: less time for workshop or late finish
2. Instruct attendees to eat first or bring packed lunch
 - Pros: easy
 - Cons: not very sociable
3. Have extended breaks to allow for eating
 - Pros: people can eat more or less when they want
 - Cons: less time for workshop/ or ate finish
4. Integrate a bring-and-share lunch from 12pm
 - Pros: social, builds community glue
 - Cons: another hour for people to find in their busy lives/arrange childcare

Conclusion: 4 as it also contributes to the aims

Logistics: Refreshments

Options:

1. Have a whip round and buy some tea & coffee
2. Use Hollybush tea & coffee and ask for donations

Conclusion: 1 – Fran has offered to do this and we need some for future events & workshops anyway.

A simple decision tool for choosing the venue

Venue	Hollybush	Friends Centre
Availability	1	1
Price	1	0
Proximity to site	1	0
Meeting room size	0	1
cleanliness	0	1
Separate crèche	1	1
Easy access	1	0
Kitchen facilities	1	1
Resources	1	0
TOTAL	7	5

Logistics: Child Care

Options:

1. Ask a trusted volunteer to run a crèche
 - Pros: parents can give workshop full attention
 - Cons: need to find someone
2. Parents run a crèche and tag-team during workshop
 - Pros: promotes sharing within parents
 - Cons: parents will miss out on workshop sections
3. Kids attend workshop
 - Pros: children's inclusion
 - Cons: distraction for other attendees

Conclusion: Strike a balance between 2 & 3 if possible

design

Mapping aims (functions, across the top) to activities (elements, down the side)

Elements/ functions	1. include new members	2 re-state vision	3. sanity check plan	4 add detail to plan	5. management plan	6. community glue	supporting aims
Welcome & housekeeping							X
Intro to the day							X
Go-round	X						X
Story so far	X	X	X	X		X	
Review constraints	X	X	X	X			
Site visit	X	X		X			
Tea break	X					X	X
Watch video	X	X		X		X	
Consensus workshop	X	X		X		X	
Tea break	X					X	X
Designing/ “Planning for Real Life”	X			X	X	X	

design

Plan of activities during the workshop. See Appendix A for original sketch

Timing	Pattern	Details
13:00	Welcome & housekeeping	Fire procedure, toilets, kitchen, check comfort levels
13:05	Intro to the day	Aims, purpose of the workshop, overview of timetable
13:15	Go-round	What do attendees want from today?
13:30	Story so far	Brainstorm & mind map “what’s the story so far?”
13:40	Review constraints AKA “Reality check”	Ensure project constraints are covered & practicalities are mentioned
13:45	Site visit	‘Graveyard shift’: movement. Refresh memories/aid visualisation of space
14:30	Tea break	Warm up if cold/wet, get everyone back together
14:45	Global Gardener video: Davis, California	Similar scheme to LILAC: perfect inspiration & stimulus for next activity
15:15	Consensus workshop	“What do we want from LILAC’s landscaping?” (see over for more detail)
16:15	Tea break	Celebrate achievement of articulating our shared vision
16:30	Designing/“Planning for Real Lite”	Introduce planting plan, 1:50 base map & supporting information docs
		Show 3d sketchup model for shading
		Review planting plan & identify spatial areas (see design 04)
		Ask area coordinators to present their area/invite volunteers
		Explain design task
18:00	Close	Help tidying up very much appreciated

design

Consensus Workshop Method

The Consensus Workshop method was devised by ICA (Institute of Cultural Affairs) as a means of promoting genuine participation when articulating and working towards shared goals. It uses 5 main stages:

1. Context: present the question the group is trying to answer and provide some stimulus/inspiration
2. Brainstorm the ideas. Ask the participants to write their responses on a card or scrap paper
3. Cluster the ideas
4. Name the clusters
5. Resolve to take relevant actions/next steps

It can be very powerful because all the voices can be heard and everyone's contribution is valued equally.

The method is perfect in this context as it allows everyone in the group to have some of their ideas represented in some form in the final vision. It both captures the group's views and builds support for the resulting vision statement as it is owned collectively. It can both honour the work done by the previous member group (as they can re-state their original vision if they wish) while allowing the newer members to contribute their own ideas.

Designing/"Planning for Real Lite"

I've called this Planning for Real Lite because it borrows ideas from Planning for Real but does not follow their prescribed processes. Also, where PFR uses 3D models of neighbourhoods, I created a large 2D base map of the proposed neighbourhood (see overleaf). Nevertheless, it is hoped that using a large enough scale (1:50), some benefits will emerge from enabling attendees to interact with, move about and physically inhabit a model of what will become our shared space. For example, it will hopefully allow the members to imagine the spaces more viscerally, consider how different areas of the site relate to one another, and to connect to the project in a more tangible way.

The idea for using paper discs to represent trees and plants was borrowed from element placement exercises I have seen and led on PDCs that I've taught on. I judged this level of design activity to be appropriate for a group with a significant proportion of 'beginners'.

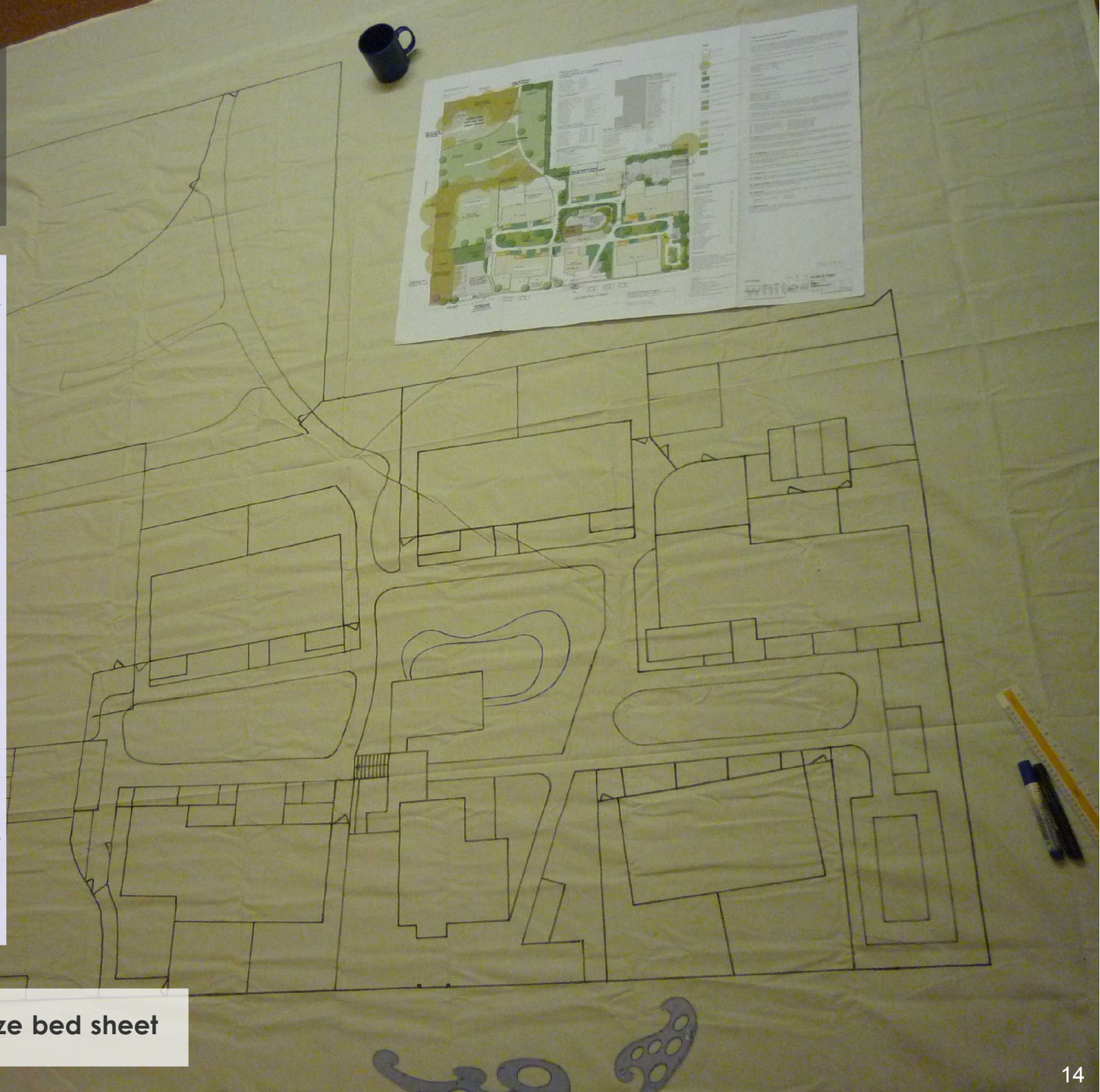
design

Preparing Resources

I created a base map by scaling up the planting plan from 1:200 to 1:50, and drawing it on a sheet. This was to enable the members to interact with it in a more physical/tangible way.

I also deliberately chose to use a single base map to reinforce the fact that we were all designing for shared space, and to avoid the possibility of multiple competing designs emerging separately for the same spaces.

1:50 was the scale I had asked the area coordinators to produce their paper discs at (see design 04), so we would have some pre-prepared resources.



1:50 base map on a king size bed sheet

design



3D model of site

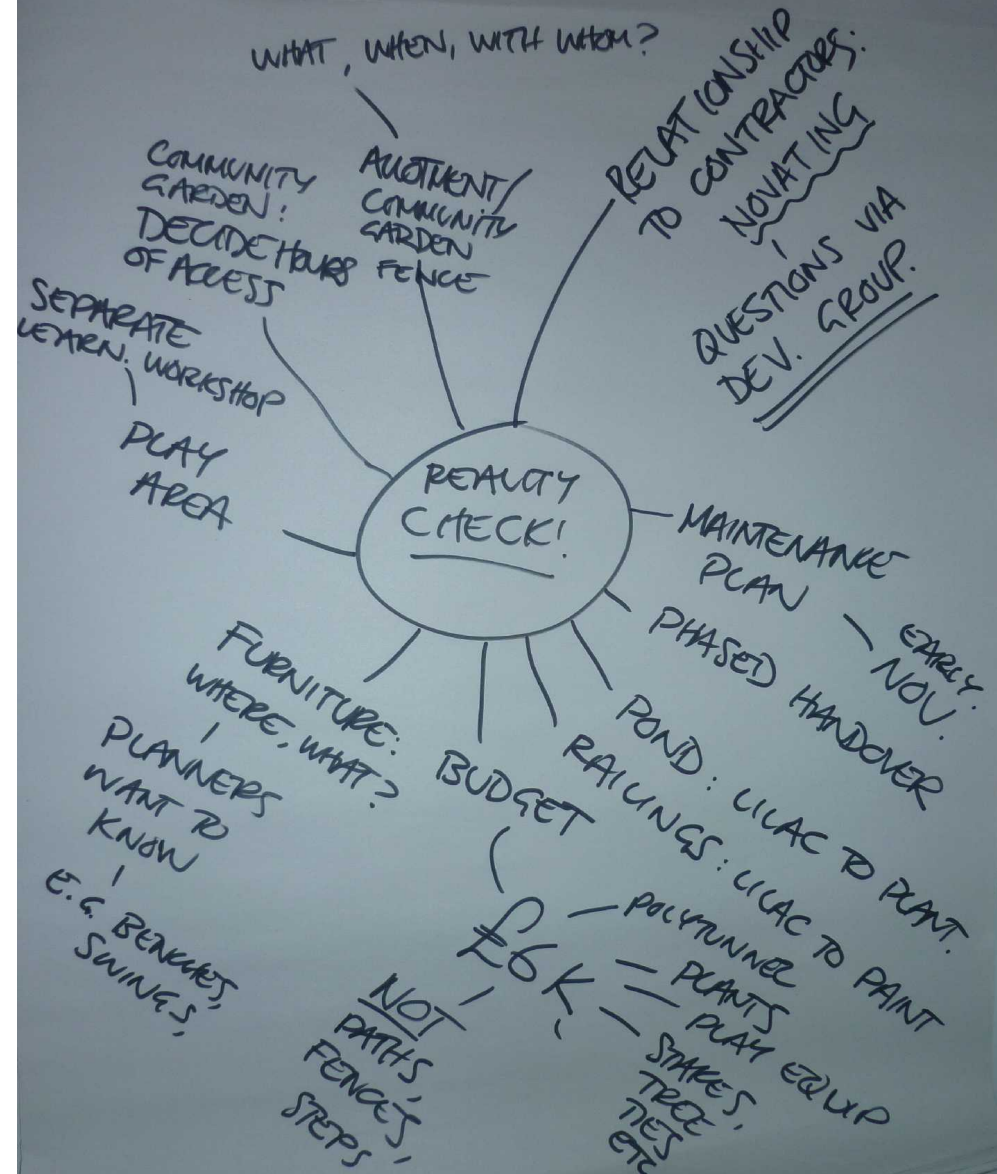
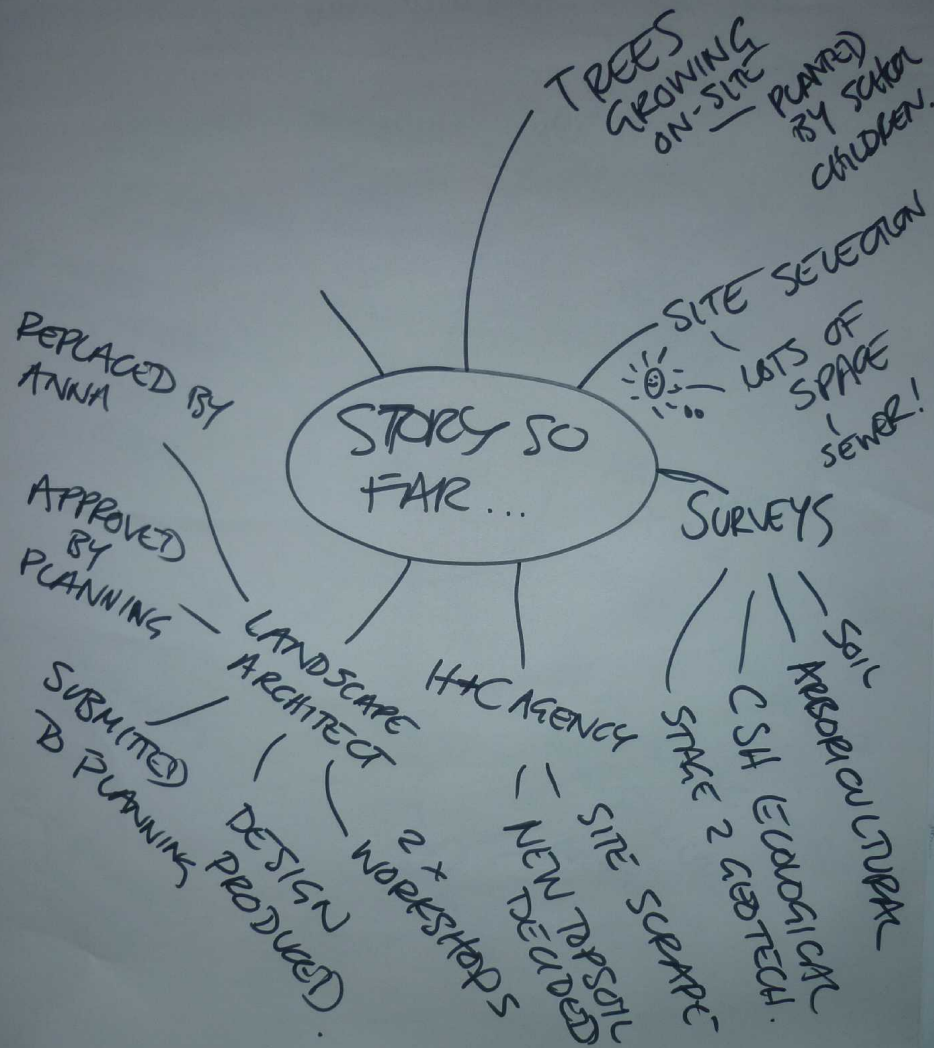
I had been experimenting with Sketchup and found that by integrating with Google Earth, it allows models to be “geolocated”: i.e. placed in their correct geographical location. This means that accurate solar modelling can be achieved. I produced a 3D model of the site to show how sun & shade would effect it (and to give those members who struggle to interpret drawings an alternative visualisation of the project, which was as yet unbuilt).

I projected the model during the workshop so members could refer to it and understand how sunny or shady a given space might be, and to select plants accordingly.

3D model to provide shading information during design exercise

implementation

Story so far & Constraints/reality check



implementation



Sheltering under trees during the site visit

implementation

Articulating our shared vision

Output from the “consensus workshop”, which enabled us to create our shared vision, by answering the following question:

“What do we want from LILAC's landscaping?”

Educational:

- Promote Sustainable Living
- To Learn from Making it

Aesthetics:

- Shade in summer and looks good in winter
- beauty diversity & variety
- year round interest
- Look good with the buildings
- pleasing to our senses
- beautiful and welcoming
- lots of greenery

Medicinal:

- medicinal herbs & aromatics

Play:

- Places to play and hang out
- wooden play park for all ages
- all age play
- play space
- nooks, dens, tree houses?
- playful – children & adults
- play – treehouses, swings, climbing

Promotes Biodiversity:

- wildlife habitat
- a colourful biodiverse jungle

Food:

- edible plants
- grow food for us all
- grow variety of fruit and veg
- food – fruits nuts veg herbs
- edible
- edible colourful plants
- useful plants (food etc)

Community:

- Good sightlines
- Social neighbourliness
- promote community

Sanctuary:

- Easy to meander around
- relaxing
- calm, quiet, private

Outside cooking & Eating:

- areas to cook and eat outside
- clay oven using subsoil

Others:

- CO2 capture
- Variety of Spaces (play, picnic, hiding, relaxing)
- Incremental & evolving

implementation



"Planning for Real Life"

implementation

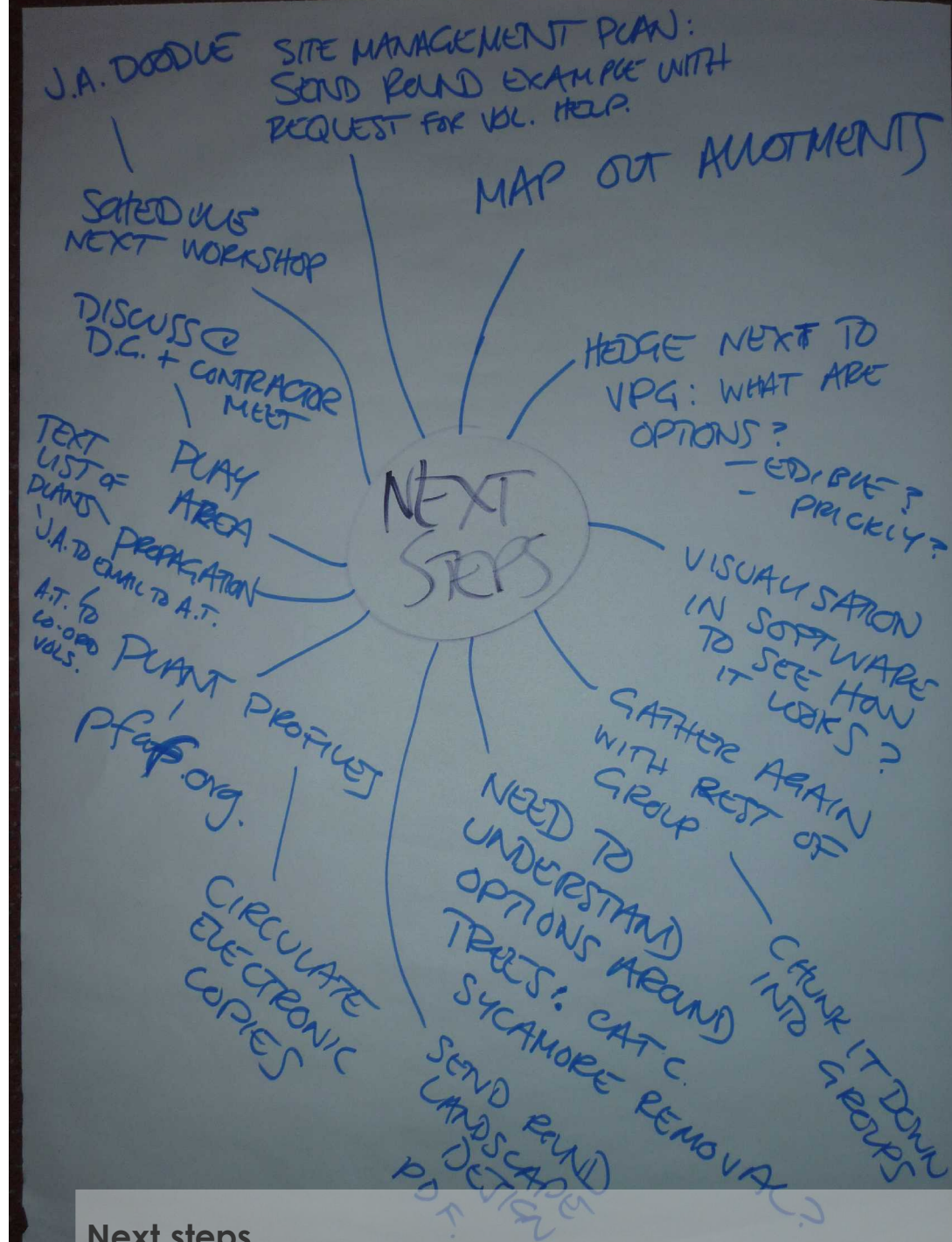


Summaries of the supporting documents were available for participants to refer to

implementation

Next steps

I realised towards the end of the workshop that I hadn't allowed any time to capture next steps. Fortunately it occurred to me while everyone else was busy cutting out circles and playing with Prit-stik, so I was able to bring the designing activity to a close slightly early and move on to the next steps.



Next steps

evaluation



evaluation

Application of permaculture ethics

People Care

- Empowering the wider membership
- Taking stress off the Development group
- Enabling people to share their knowledge and gain new skills
- Providing support to the area coordinators in the form of fresh ideas
- Building inclusion into the event at all levels
- Considering "supporting aims"
- Having fun

Earth Care

- Using Village Homes, Davis California as the stimulus/inspiration was (rather blatantly) intended to promote the local food agenda.

Setting Limits to Consumption & Redistributing Surplus

- Encouraging area coordinators to plant edibles, reducing food miles
- Bring and share lunch

evaluation

Application of permaculture principles

Observe & Interact	Observation of disparity of involvement between long-standing members and newer members with regard to the landscape plan. This struck me as an important issue.
Catch & Store Energy	List of next steps; output from the design exercise
Obtain a Yield	Output from the design exercise
Apply Self-regulation & Accept Feedback	-
Use & Value Renewable Resources & Services	-
Produce no Waste	-
Design from Patterns to Details	Started out with functions, identified candidate elements to perform them. Also, page 12.
Integrate Rather than Segregate	Multi-functional 'elements' in design.
Use Small & Slow Solutions	Didn't try to finish the design at this session. The more realistic aim of inclusion was achieved
Use & Value Diversity	Involving the
Use Edges & Value the Marginal	Involving the children in the design exercise meant we got some interesting ideas – a bit of spontaneous wild design.
Creatively Use & Respond to Change	It started raining quite heavily during the site visit so we cut it short

reflection

What went well?

- This design really demonstrated the power of preparing well
- Feedback from one participant was “that was the best workshop I’ve ever been to.”
- I really enjoyed doing it
- Empowering my fellow community members felt potent
- It felt like many of us came together as a community for the first time

What was challenging?

- The wonderful chaos that is (very small) child care integrated into meetings/workshops/events
- Some attendees’ behaviour/etiquette – not deliberately difficult or malicious, just not very self-aware
- A profoundly hearing-impaired member was finding it difficult to hear & be included
- Time management: I was very ambitious and didn’t really have enough time at the end for everything I wanted to do

Long term visions & goals

- Lots of great designs from the area coordinators
- Create my own design for the tree area: see design 06 [LILAC Tree Plan](#)
- Even greater community coalescence
- A beautiful & productive landscape in line with the community’s shared vision!

Next achievable steps

- Schedule next workshop
 - Design outline
 - Invite other landscape team members to help with design/facilitation
- Write site management plan – see Design 04 [LILAC Landscape Team](#) appendix E