

NATURAL PROCESS BASED PLANNING, THREE CASES IN CHINA

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project explores the use of natural processes in relation to spatial planning, with the aim to develop conceptual tools for architects to more actively integrate natural processes in planning and design.

The use of natural processes in relation to spatial planning is understood as a sensitive reading and response to a site's topography, hydrology, climate and ecology. The approach considers the spatial requirements for natural processes and implements these in a creative way. The project draws on work by Ian McHarg and Michael Hough as well as newer strands of thinking within landscape urbanism. The main project hypothesis is that natural processes provide a basis for developing affordable and environmentally sound planning solutions, since they reveal clues about the local conditions, ecologically as well as culturally.

The project has planning in China as its focus and evolves around three cases; neighbourhood developments in Wuxi, Caofeidian and Wuhan. The Wuxi and Caofeidian cases investigate the role of natural processes in relation to spatial planning on a local as well as strategic level. The work of the two architect groups connected to the Wuxi and the Caofeidian projects, is followed; Schmidt Hammer Lassen architects (SHL) and their work with a residential area in Wuxi and THCA architects at Beijing Tsinghua Urban Planning and Design Institute (THUPDI) and

their work with a new area for the local government in the eco city Caofeidian. Data is collected through literature review and study of planning documents and drawing material as well as interviews and participant observation at the Schmidt Hammer Lassen office in Copenhagen and at the THCA office at THUPDI in Beijing. Based on the case study material, environmental strategies are identified and conceptual tools facilitating integration of natural processes in the early design phase, are developed. The environmental strategies and conceptual tools are tested and refined through the Wuhan case, a residential area on the urban-rural fringe. Through the Wuhan case, explorative drawings and diagrams are developed with help of GIS and environmental analysis software, in a continuous dialogue with the architect groups at SHL and THCA.



DATA

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