

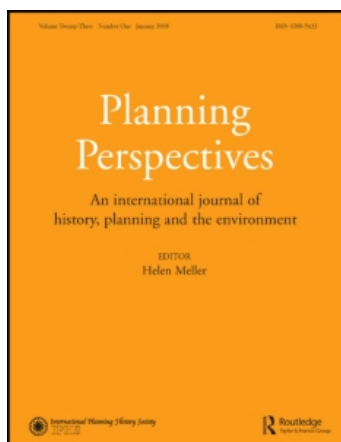
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New town planning instruments: participation or governance? The case of Brussels through the ‘Botanique structure plan’

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This paper presents an analysis of some of the socio-political stakes riding on the recent implementation of a ‘structure plan’ (or *schéma directeur*) for the ‘Botanique’ area in Brussels. The aim is to build a bridge between the discussions about the new modes of governance and the development of participatory or deliberative democracy, on the one hand, and an empirical study of a public policy that borrows from these categories, on the other hand. The innovative practices that characterise the ‘structure plan’ are often labelled ‘participatory’. In this text, we intend to determine to what extent they participate more in a new type of urban governance without truly helping to enhance the people’s involvement.

Keywords: town planning; Brussels; citizen participation; governance; democracy

Brussels’ context: a brief historical introduction

Since the nineteenth century, Brussels’ history can be read through its urban projects and through the failures of many of them in the last 50 years.¹ Major transformations were realised under the reign of Leopold II (1865–1909). As an emblematic example, the Law Court (Brussels Palace of Justice) was built between 1866 and 1883 by Joseph Poelaert. Bigger than St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, the building is situated on a hill and overhangs the popular quarter of ‘Marollen’. Because of its construction, the inhabitants were forced to either leave or to live in the shadow of the Palace, symbolising the power of justice. The word ‘architect’ has been used ever since as an insult in *brusselaer* (an old Brussels’ popular dialect, mixing French and Dutch). The second half of the nineteenth century is nevertheless considered an auspicious period in urban planning.

Throughout the twentieth century, most of the important projects took decades to be realised. For instance, the work related to the north–south (railway) junction began in 1903 and ended in 1952. It meant that the whole of Brussels was opened up. Many neighbourhoods were expropriated from the city centre. After the Second World War, various projects were conceived to consolidate the role of Brussels as a national capital, as an international city and as the main administrative centre of the European Union. However, from the 1950s to the 1980s only a minority of those projects were (success)fully achieved and some simply failed, partly because of the social protest movements. As a glorious example, the plan to extend the Palace of Justice was stopped in 1969 by the ‘Marollen Battle’. That crucial episode of ‘urban struggles’ also led to the emergence of quite powerful anti-establishment urban associations, like ARAU (*Atelier de recherche et d’action urbaines*). To sum up, relations between habitants and urban projects have always been complicated and often conflicting in Brussels, and today’s politics are still a compromise with that legacy.

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During the 1980s, the economical and social situation worsened in Belgium as elsewhere, contributing to the decline of the nation-states. At the same time, Belgium became a federal state. The officially bilingual Brussels-Capital Region was created in 1989. The Brussels-Capital Region is the smallest of the three autonomous regions in Belgium (with Wallonia and Flanders), with 19 very different and ancient municipalities, one million inhabitants and a territory of 162 km². Since its creation, the Brussels-Capital Region thus has had to face both common and more specific challenges whose importance is highly revealed in the realm of urban planning and regional development. In particular, multiple difficulties have had to be overcome in the successful (re)development of the last important regional sites or areas: in terms of public financial resources, public/private partnerships, multi-levelled governance (federal state/Brussels-Capital Region/municipalities) and democracy (because of the opposition of some neighbourhood committees to major projects).

In the last 10 years, regional authorities have been trying to implement new planning tools in order to solve such problems. In what follows, we are interested principally in the ability of one of those tools – the ‘structure plan’ (*schéma directeur* in French or *richtschema* in Dutch) – to improve governance and participatory democracy in urban planning and regional development. We are concretely focusing on the first experimentation of that tool in 2006, in order to reallocate the so-called *Cité administrative de l’État* (CAE).²

The first ‘structure plan’ for Brussels: participation or ‘how not to repeat past mistakes’

The CAE is a huge administrative complex (11 hectares) built between 1958 and 1983 in pure modernist-functionalist style (see Figures 3 and 5). Situated close to the very heart of Brussels city, near the Botanical Garden (or *Botanique*), it was imagined before the Second World War to concentrate most of the ministries when Belgium was still (but not for long) a unitary state. At the beginning of 2000, buildings were cheaply sold to private real estate investors under conditions. A new generation of planners and architects emerged at the same time. They were opposed to the destruction of the modernist architecture, supported participatory planning and succeeded in influencing decision-makers. A few years later, among the urban and environmental associations who are long-standing players and defenders of participation in Brussels, some (temporarily?) agreed to work hand-in-hand with the authorities. BRAL (*Brusselse Raad voor het Leefmilieu*) and its French-speaking counterpart IEB (*Inter-Environnement Bruxelles*) were being paid by the Brussels-Capital Region to play the role of mediator during the process of elaboration of the first structure plans (including the ‘Botanique’ structure plan dedicated to the CAE).

The 2002 regional development plan (*Plan regional de développement* or PRD in French, *Gewestelijk ontwikkelingsplan* in Dutch) is the text which defines the tool and the cases to be concerned. The PRD is rather indicative and programmatic than really compulsory. According to the PRD, the successful conversion of 14 sites that are defined as ‘leverage areas’ (*zones leviers* or *hefboomgebieden*) is the number one priority for the Brussels-Capital Region because these areas are characterised both by their high potentialities and serious difficulties (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). Still, according to the PRD, this conversion is supposed to be achieved by implementing the ‘structure plan’. In all cases, the last is to be ‘drawn up with a view to striking the best balance of the various players’ aims and expectations and to transcend possible competing rationales’.³ So, besides the economic efficiency that this new planning

policy aims for, the authorities also hoped to avoid ‘repeating the errors of the past’⁴ and thus to include in the setting of the redevelopment guidelines the players who are potentially concerned by the leverage areas’ rehabilitation and the work that this entails when it comes to community facilities, services, mobility and transport, for example, in and around the sites. The set of procedures enshrined in the structure plan is then supposed to make good on two promises: namely, to foster a form of urban development that is both effective in terms of the territorial attractiveness and that is the fruit of concerted action by the whole range of social players. Indeed, the memory of the ‘urban battles’ that were waged in Brussels remains just as strong as that of the failures of the huge real estate projects that actually triggered them.

The methodology proposed by the structure plan is the result of a change in thinking in Brussels’ town planning circles. This context explains why the first structure plan, that is, the one regarding the rehabilitation of the ‘Botanique’ leverage area and the reallocation of the State Administrative Complex, was originally conceived of as a methodology or as a ‘process’, rather than a plan (see Figure 6).⁵ This context also sheds light on the fact that the regional government entrusted the job of drawing up the procedure to urban planners, Morits & Simon Architects (MSA), who subscribed to this view, given the experience they had acquired through their work on several ‘neighbourhood pacts’ (*contrats de quartier*)⁶ and the vision of ‘making the city’ that they defended with their famous French temporary partner, Yves Lion.⁷

In line with the project’s designers’ thinking, the procedure for drawing up the ‘Botanique’ structure plan was supposed to comprise a series of steps or ‘phases’. The entire process was punctuated by public meetings open to all and workshops (dubbed *Ateliers de la Cité*), as well as meetings of smaller committees, that is, the *comités d’accompagnement* (which brought together the regional and local authorities, site owner, ministries and associations as information relays) and ‘tripartite round tables’ (which brought together the Brussels-Capital Region, municipal authorities and the main urban planner). These ‘private’ meetings were then supposed to take the outcomes of the public meetings on board. It was assumed that they would take up the suggestions and criticism that came out of the events organised under the public strand of the procedure, as the final version of the structure plan (approved by the Brussels Government on 30 November 2006⁸) summed it up evasively. We must also stress that this final document contains right off the bat the presentation of what its authors call ‘a project process linked to an innovative scheme’,⁹ which spells out how the scheme works and outlines the four major ‘phases’ of the plan’s development, the players involved and timetables for the meetings for each phase.

For the urban planner, the idea was indeed to include all of the parties that might be concerned by the project in the project development procedure. The Brussels-Capital Region, the private partners who had become the owners of the administrative complex’s buildings, the two municipalities (City of Brussels and Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode) in which the area was located, and the federal and regional enterprises managing the public transports were obviously mentioned. However, in addition, it was stipulated, ‘Other types of non-institutional players are also involved in this process, which cannot be limited to a discussion amongst administrations, political authorities, and the site’s owners.’¹⁰ The idea was also to include ‘the residents and frequent users of the surrounding neighbourhoods’ and ‘associations, which in the past were particularly mobilised and active with regard to the future of the administrative complex site’.¹¹

The final report thus explicitly includes a maximally broad definition of the ‘players’ involved. Of course, this definition is allusive and only mentions the residents and associations



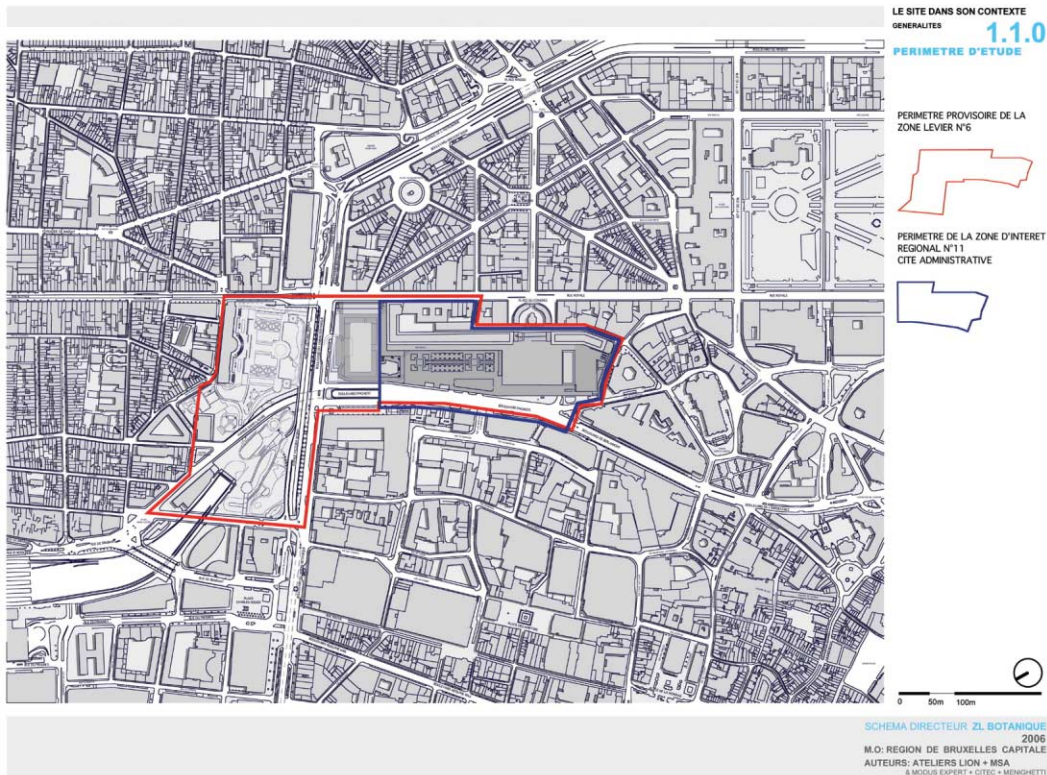


Figure 2. Perimeters of the 'Botanique' area (*zone levier n°6*) and of the CAE site (*zone d'intérêt régional n°11*) in the final report of the structure plan in 2006.

Source: MSA/Ateliers Lion.

as forming together the 'non-institutional' players who (allegedly) took part in the 'process'. In addition, it is not clear whether this process was described and summarised in the final report in terms of its ideal characteristics or as it truly unfurled. The reference to the 'users' mentioned in the final report, for example, refers to an early discussion but the same users were never actually invited. This detail reflects in a way how difficult it is to put a perspective that aims to be highly inclusive into practice. Nevertheless, such a perspective is indeed identified in what was said beforehand and after the fact in some cases. Here the statements of the regional authorities and, to a lesser extent, those of the project's designer regarding both the scheme *per se* and the first instance of its implementation come to mind. The regional politicians commissioning the work and the urban planner who designed the 'Botanique' structure plan almost always stressed the openness that characterised the urban renewal project upstream from its development and, more generally, the openness of the tool that it used, that is, defining the parties involved and the possible choices that could be made regarding the project's content.

So, beyond the terms used, the participation to which the texts and declarations refer so often seems to be subtended by an understanding of this fuzzy notion that is at least 'proactive' when it comes to mobilising the various players and target groups and the desire to bring them



Figure 3. Map of the CAE buildings in 2006.
Source: MSA/Ateliers Lion.

together, get them involved, consult them and inform them. The sole fact of having called upon BRAL and its 30 years of experience for this purpose is eloquent. The same politicians and experts seemed, moreover, to use the notion of participation in a rather ‘maximalistic’ sense: for example, in defending the idea that the structure plan, in its very essence, could or even should be a sort of co-decision or co-production process so as to be able to accommodate the various points of view on the site. More specifically, this is how the ‘Botanique’ plan’s main designer summarised his own planning philosophy, although he simultaneously recognised that such an objective could not be achieved the first time around. Whilst the structure plan opened, in other words, a new era in the development of large-scale urban projects,¹² the ‘Botanique’ structure plan was a first. Like what happened with the Brussels ‘neighbourhood pacts’ scheme, one consequently could not gauge the scheme’s ‘participatory’ potential based solely on its first implementation. Still, its linchpins and main advocates felt that the ‘participatory’ strand of the scheme, along with the meeting of the deadlines initially set for developing the ‘Botanique’ structure plan, was indeed what deserved to be praised and what justified repeating the experience.

Even though ‘participation’ is not only a matter of talk, we can already see that the definition of the notion was not clarified, despite its many occurrences in the statements of politicians, town planners and associations in various stages of the procedure. On the contrary, it

was muddled even more by the concurrent use of expressions that were hardly more explicit. The ‘contract notice’ (*avis de marché*) issued by the Brussels-Capital Region thus spoke of ‘consulting the population’ as being one of the urban planning agency’s tasks.¹³ The ‘special terms of reference’ (*cahier special des charges*) may not have clarified the role of the association acting under a brief from the Brussels-Capital Region, but referred to this role in related but likewise fuzzy terms: for BRAL’s role was ‘to facilitate dialogue and consultation between the residents and government of the Brussels-Capital Region’; to organise ‘consultation of the representatives of the various players’ or ‘of the population’; and to carry out consultations ‘in the form of in-depth interviews of the strategic players and working meetings in select committees within the framework of the support committee and broader communications (general assemblies or open meetings)’.¹⁴ We can thus hypothesise that this conceptual vagueness simply reflects far-reaching political indecisiveness as to what was expected, the means, and the subject of the said ‘participation’ in the first structure plans.

This indecisiveness and lack of precision were in a way confirmed in the course of 2006, when the scheme was put into practice. Before beginning a detailed analysis of some of the episodes in the actual procedure that struck us as particularly meaningful, we feel it is necessary to look at the general theoretical stakes that were riding on the first test of a ‘structure plan’ in Brussels. This ‘trial run’ points to questions that contain nothing that is radically original when one considers the experiences that have been examined in the considerable amount of literature on the new ways of thinking of and achieving democracy on the local level. The Brussels experience resonates more specifically with the studies of urban public policies to revitalise seedy or ‘sensitive’ neighbourhoods or to rehabilitate urban wastelands. Here as elsewhere, who ‘participates’, ‘how’ and ‘why’? Is it simply a matter of having the ‘participants’, ‘people’ or ‘public’ take a stand for or against a project that has been drawn up already? Or must they answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to specific questions, along the lines of a democracy through referenda? Is it more a process with a less reactive aim that provides for discussion, if not deliberation, as part of the process of drawing up and finalising the project? As we intend to build a bridge between some theoretical debates and the study of the ‘Botanique’ case, it is important to mention, even succinctly, what more general questions may connect the two, in order to give more precise content to the expressions that are used, or at least circumscribe the areas of shadow that surround their use.

Participation, deliberation, and governance: theoretical elements in a delicate balance

As we just suggested, experiments with innovative schemes designed to foster public participation are flourishing, especially in urban policies. Although this is partially a long-standing trend – public survey procedures, for example, have existed in Belgian law since the nineteenth century¹⁵ – they have branched out into a host of new forms today: ‘structure plans’, ‘civic forums’, ‘town planning workshops’, ‘participatory budgets’, ‘neighbourhood contracts’ and so on. These more or less new procedures share the fact that they have freed themselves from a certain legalistic formalism. They are also accompanied by a very fashionable vocabulary in which the notions of ‘participation’, ‘consultation’, ‘concertation’,¹⁶ ‘deliberation’ and ‘urban governance’ come to the fore. They target ‘residents’, ‘citizens’, ‘users’, ‘key players’ or simply ‘the public’. They aim to ‘consult’, ‘inform’, ‘listen to’ or ‘open up to the people’.

The ‘participatory mantra’, which is as vague as it is powerful, is as a rule intended to restore legitimacy to political decisions or, more directly, to the political players and institutions themselves. At the same time, it also serves other objectives ranging from the modernisation of administration to the revitalisation of social ties, with the taking of better, more workable decisions in between. This conceptual fuzziness and diversity of practices doubtless trigger amazement and scepticism. Many authors stress, moreover, the ‘gadgetry’ – in the best of cases – or ‘manipulative nature’ of these practices.¹⁷ Yet, whilst the conceptual fuzziness of these ‘all-purpose’ concepts may fuel the suspicion that these are just more cases of illusions or a mockery of democracy, this same fuzziness also explains in part the success of such talk. The commands of said participation can, moreover, find a place in the rhetoric of both the World Bank and movements militating for alternative global development. How, then, at least heuristically useful is analysis of these words and deeds possible?

A first approach explored in some empirical studies consists in determining the ‘degree of public participation’ that is aspired to or achieved in a procedure of the type mentioned above.¹⁸ So, Sherry Arnstein’s¹⁹ ‘ladder of citizen participation’ documents the importance of the gaps between the potential degrees of public involvement and makes the finest possible distinctions between a manipulative form of participation that is ultimately nothing more than the appearance of participation and strong participation extending to forms of self-management. As Donzelot and Epstein point out, this grid’s success is due to the fact that ‘[...] regarding a concept with a content that is as extensive as it is vague, it provided a very clear principle for ranking the practices [...] associated with this term and enabled one to say what deserved to be called participation and what did not’.²⁰ That being said, whilst this typology has the merit of clarifying the degree of the people’s involvement and can provide a foundation for evaluating ‘participatory’ procedures, it does not take account of other dimensions, such as the degree of openness to some players (and not to others), the definitions or ‘certifications’ of certain players and even the quality of the procedure itself.

The perspective that we have chosen here is to present a variety of conceptualisations that are useful to understand reality but are often swamped by the semantic vagueness that is inherent in most policies on the ground. Thanks to these conceptualisations we see first of all that a lack of thought about the participant her/himself and the selections that must be made to designate ‘the legitimate participant’ lurks behind the consensus-based call for participation. According to the theory, it is necessary to question these categories on which the participatory procedure’s organisation will be founded. So, is it an open public formed by a broad appeal on a voluntary basis? Is it more specifically a ‘purified’ public,²¹ that is to say, one that is detached from its associative, political and/or ethnic/community ties, able to be involved for a relatively long time, and wishing to learn and to give itself the means of all kinds that are necessary for effective involvement? Or is it a public that is directly affected by the issue at hand and thus perceived to have ‘expert knowledge’ of some facet of everyday life? Is it a public of ‘shareholders’ (those who actually own property rights) or ‘stakeholders’ (those who have certain stakes in the venture without owning actual ‘property shares’)? Finally, is it a public composed of individuals or built up from pre-established collectives defending a particular perspective in the ways that the problems are tackled and types of solution that are needed?

As we see, the definition of the public entails different types of relationships with knowledge. There is the flexible, plural knowledge that will be built in the procedure, with each

participant having abilities and resources to mobilise; ‘expertise’ in everyday matters where the participant is already assumed to have preferences; the knowledge of ‘experts’ that has been built up in an institutionalised collective and so on. These various types of knowledge do not all give the same value to a ‘cultural rationality’ (in opposition to the traditional ‘technical rationality’) that can be defined as a type of rationality based on ‘personal and familiar experiences rather than depersonalised technical calculations’.²²

Moreover, the notion of participation refers most often to the theory of ‘participatory democracy’,²³ which values participation as an end in itself, as an essential value of ‘the good life’ for everyone.²⁴ The absence of thought about the participant that is observed recurrently in practice brings up another question. In other words, the vision of a good presence that suffices in itself usually does not answer the following questions: ‘Participation to do what and how?’ The need to get various players involved and talk to each other in order to take the best decisions can nevertheless be part of these new mantras of public action, to the point where one could even have mentioned the idea of a ‘deliberative imperative’.²⁵

Yet – and such a theoretical distinction seems to be just as interesting from a heuristic point of view – participation is not deliberation. Whilst one ‘often slides unnoticeably from one notion to the other, given that deliberative democracy is often perceived to be a sort of contemporary variant of participatory democracy [...]’,²⁶ it is necessary from an analytical standpoint to clarify the debate. Participation refers to a democratic ideal according to which all citizens should be involved directly in managing public matters beyond electoral periods. Deliberation concerns more the method that is used to guarantee that the best decisions are taken. More specifically, ‘the notion of a deliberative democracy is anchored in the intuitive ideal of a democratic association in which the terms and conditions of the association are justified by public argumentation and rational exchanges between equal citizens.’²⁷ So, whilst these two notions of participation and deliberation do not exclude each other – at least not in all philosophical traditions²⁸ – they cannot be reduced to equivalents of each other. We shall come back to this.

We must mention one last key notion, that of ‘governance’. This notion is even more encompassing because it is used as much in the spheres of international relations and international politics as on the national and local levels and is instrumentalised just as much by the players and observers as are the notions of participation and deliberation.²⁹ Beyond the fuzziness that relates it to both a slogan and a new and widely denounced ‘power word’,³⁰ this notion of governance can also give other keys to understanding the ‘participatory’ phenomenon. The notion of governance has various levels or fields of application that can, moreover, be mobilised simultaneously. At times it supports descriptive aims (‘urban governance’ that describes the changes in local public action patterns, for example), at other times it supports prescriptive aims (to define the standards of ‘good governance’ that should be adopted), and at still other times it supports analytical purposes. In the last case, it means to provide a conceptual framework for understanding and interpreting a new reality. Of course, it is also one of those fashionable ‘all-embracing’ notions that are used to serve ideologically opposing discourse and practices. If it is used on an analytical level, it can nevertheless help to reveal, by showing up what they do not include, a problematic dimension to the phenomena that we have observed, namely, the relative absence of deep thought about democracy.³¹ Governance approaches effectively put much more emphasis on other dimensions, such as the multiplicity of players or stakeholders, the boom in partnerships between government institutions or

players and private players, companies, and ‘partners’ (‘public–private partnerships’), the increasing complexity of political action, and especially of decision-making, the coordination problems to which this gives rise, questions linked to the imputation of the decision and thus accountability and so on. In a word, these approaches ultimately pay little attention to such questions as the decision-making game’s openness to the people and associations, transparency and civic oversight.

To sum up, the notions of participation, deliberation and governance can be considered to share some analytical moorings, namely, the sometimes imprecise perspectives that they give on the more open and broader definition of the players involved in government action. These new ‘theories’ thus refute the absolute primacy of the role of the State and its central bodies, that is, the institutions of representative democracy and administration. Generally speaking:

A sort of ideology of democratic governance that is currently widespread in university and leadership circles effectively includes the main achievements that the philosophies of deliberative democracy posit, namely, giving value to debate and negotiation, including a wide range of players, paying attention to procedures, and striving for consensus. Against a centralised decision-making model in which the political and administrative authority would continue to claim to have a monopoly on the general interest.³²

The three notions and the approaches that stem from them nevertheless contain some major divergences that must be exploited. If we magnify some elements and smooth out differences in the various currents within these three ‘paradigms’, we can then identify three major fracture points. First of all, when it comes to the procedural questions, whilst participation can very well make do with ‘presence’, deliberation belongs rather to a logic of dialogue and generation of a common decision. This entails rational, even reasonable, argumentation that does not exclude the existence of certain ‘balances of power’. Governance, for its part, does not truly involve the existence of deliberation and whilst coordination is important, governance-based approaches ‘do not differentiate between deliberation and bargaining and are not at all interested in the fact that these two dynamics can generate diverging rationalities’.³³ Moreover, the transparency of the procedure and publicness of the interactions are also important in the logic of deliberation.

As for the second type of question, concerning the players, governance analyses put emphasis first and foremost on partnership with private sector players (especially market operators) and the public action networks that mix private and public players from different power levels. In other words, these analyses give the people and associations short shrift. The opposite is true when it comes to the second model, centred on the notion of participation, which values the involvement of ‘ordinary citizens’ above all else. Finally, we could say that the players do not always seem to be a core issue in deliberation-based analyses. Some authors admit, for example, that deliberation that gives rise to decisions should be restricted to the citizens’ representatives only,³⁴ whereas others value the direct participation of everyone.

The third point of fracture, which concerns the matter of knowledge, is not independent from the other two. Whilst the three paradigms value the existence of different points of view and the need to increase the number of stakeholders involved, the participatory approaches support a perspective in which knowledge is disseminated. Each citizen is competent in the area of public management and should be able to issue her/his views on behalf of her/his ties to the group. In the deliberative approach, in contrast to the participatory one, the focus is on the way to construct a certain type of knowledge. The procedure is what enables many points of view

on a subject to culminate in more rational, more balanced, knowledge. A major difference between the participatory and deliberative approaches 'is this key assumption of the mutability of interests and the potential for the discovery (or construction) of common goals among participants'.³⁵ Finally, the governance approach clearly gives heightened value to the knowledge of the most influential groups, of those who have direct stakes (shareholders and stakeholders) in the matter, without caring much about the knowledge that everyone has or the procedure whereby this knowledge is constructed.

Back to the 'Botanique' case: some eloquent anecdotes

The above presentation of the major types of approach that we deem relevant is obviously too sketchy to reflect the reality of practices in the field, especially those described earlier concerning the process of drawing up an urban project. These models nevertheless help us to think about what this process forgets to think of. In isolating the 'concepts' or 'ideas', even the ideals that are supposed to guide or at least point the 'good practices' in the right direction, they reveal, like on a negative, the hybrid, contrasted, ambivalent natures of the new patterns of public action. In what follows we do not intend to issue a verdict on the public procedures that we observed in connection with the 'Botanique' structure plan. As we pointed out, the theories themselves are also hybrid and groping, often halfway between analytical and prescriptive aims, and share many elements, including their shadowy areas. Rather, we shall isolate certain episodes, some of which may seem to be of no importance, in order to connect them to the questions revealed by the theoretical analyses and then to highlight the hesitations inherent in the first implementation of a new tool.

Disconnected stages and moments

The 'launch' of the 'Botanique' structure plan was held in 'Saint-Gery' covered market, a quite fashionable place in the very heart of Brussels, on 12 December 2006, at the initiative of the President-Minister of the Brussels-Capital Region. In the morning, the experts, regional institutions and associations were invited to a press conference organised by the political authorities. This press conference was of course open to everyone, but the 'residents' were invited more specifically to attend the cocktails that opened the exhibition at the end of the day. These cocktails were held in the same place and organised by BRAL, who were mindful of the fact that ordinary residents could not necessarily take time off from their jobs during the day.

The existence of two separate 'moments' marking the same event is obviously anecdotal. Nor is there any reason to think that it revealed some special 'intention' contrary to the 'spirit' that was supposed to drive the new scheme, that is, getting all of the players around the same table, even if only purely formally. Still, the story illustrates well a certain duality of stages between which the players sometimes found it hard to meet. On the one hand were public areas or moments that were more or less wide open, depending on whether they were participatory workshops or information meetings, and on the other hand there were areas and moments where a restricted number of leading players negotiated and took decisions.

The procedure itself, as we have said, provided for 'tripartite round tables' to bring the public authorities concerned together and 'support committee' meetings to bring the urban

planning agency, regional and municipal authorities and project's promoters together. It was also given that the association BRAL could attend the support committee meetings as an observer in order to relay information to the residents that the same association could not properly represent, as had been proposed, given its role as a 'neutral' mediator. In other words, the scheme, as it was interpreted in the planning's methodology, provided for two stages – one that was public and one that was not – in phase with each other. However, the principle of this repartition of the roles, spaces and times is not in itself the problem. Rather, it is the fact that this duality was accompanied by a disconnection between the two space-times that seemed to widen as the design process progressed. This schism was deepened to a great extent by an increasingly powerful disagreement about the project's general direction that pitted the owners of the site against the public authorities and urban planner in charge. The observer might have had the impression that some players felt that the main thing was to reach a formal agreement within the foreseen deadlines. So the third and last participatory workshop that was scheduled did not take place, due to a context in which it was important to minimise the reverberations of what was going on inside a power struggle between the public and private sectors.

Here as elsewhere, the multiplicity of moments and places for debate and decision-making gave rise to problems of monitoring and readability. However, these problems were worsened by the fact that wheeling and dealing were going on in the wings of the scheme, during informal meetings, as some players we have interviewed admitted. In a nutshell, the multiplicity of hard-to-identify and disconnected stages at least fuelled doubts as to the weight that certain players – the ordinary citizens, but also the private promoters – and their concerns carried in the decisive discussions that took place in their absence. Ultimately, the urban planner alone was responsible for including (or not including) what was said on one and/or the other stage, from one stage to the next, and between stages, in his project. Backtracking slightly may enable us to confirm this statement.

The promoters' model

The second and last 'public information meeting' on the 'Botanique' structure plan, which was 'open to everyone', was organised by BRAL on 4 September 2006 in a youth hostel located not far from the administrative complex. It actually wrapped up the participatory strand of the structure plan drafting process, which had begun with the first information meeting in February. The invitation stipulated that the draft structure plan would be presented by the urban planner, and that the expert, public authorities and site's owners would then field questions and remarks from the floor.

The site's owners were out in force, although they had kept very low profiles in the procedure up until the summer of 2006. It is true that they, too, had a project to present to the public via their own expert. However, the presentation of that 'alternative' project was not included in the agenda of this public meeting. Beyond the surprise effect, such an omission heightened the feeling that the future unveiling of the promoters' own project was going to be an attempt to steamroll this project through. Actually, the wooden model that they had brought along and unveiled at the end of the meeting (and the illustrated and commented principles of which) practically stole the show from MSA's plan. For an outside observer, the scene was eloquent. It effectively consisted of a challenging of the consensus-based, negotiated, deliberative nature of the scheme that had been carried out. Three elements support such an assessment.

First of all, the site owners' counter-project was truly 'alternative', and expressed their far-reaching disagreement with the options that the 'official' project preferred. So, whilst the MSA project favoured renovation of the existing heritage, the owners' project did away with the slab roof that formed the elevated esplanade and reinstated a huge staircase, to focus on only two emblematic elements that, moreover, continued to trigger major arguments. Next, the promoters waited until the last moment, and a public one, to present the project for the first time not only to the residents, but also to their main partners in the process of drawing up the structure plan. As a result, it seemed that at least one player, and a major one, was showing rather open mistrust of the joint decision-making procedure. Finally, the owners did not content themselves with showing simple drawings and graphic representations of their ideas to support their presentation. In presenting a model that had been designed by the American architectural firm KPF, the owner and investor also showed – or reminded – the audience of the magnitude of his (financial) means. It is just as eloquent – and somewhat paradoxical – that the promoters tried at the same time to rally to their cause the residents and the more radically critical association ARAU and managed to do so that evening fairly well. Two coalitions seemed to be engaged in a face-off from that moment on and were caught in a balance of power that was marked by clear power differentials that also made use of different registers. The parties had clearly strayed far from the logic of dialogue and rational argumentation that the concept of deliberation entailed, and on which the entire procedure was also based. The following example illustrates that even more concretely.

The esplanade and stairway: pointless debates?

Groups of residents had formed during the first 'Atelier de la Cité' (workshop) on 11 March 2006. Various points were discussed, including that of maintaining the esplanade. The positions that were expressed were far from unanimous. Some residents considered it to be ugly, windy, useless or highly impractical. Some suggested that the renovation should result in buildings and gardens 'in terraces with patios'. Others felt that Cluysenaar's famous 'monumental stairway' should be recreated (see Figure 4). In a continuation of this vision, some added that it would be better to tear everything down and carry out an audacious new renovation. Was the esplanade truly necessary? Would it be possible to rip it out? It was difficult to answer these questions, and the reigning ambiguity was not dispelled. Between the technical possibility of demolishing and rebuilding the esplanade and the 'untouchability' of this architectural given (concrete slab town planning), between technical know-how and town planning viewpoints, doubts about these questions seemed to hover and would continue to hover throughout the participatory process. These requests (to demolish the esplanade, return to a more gentle slope or recreate a monumental staircase) came up time and again. One can understand that keeping the esplanade and slab roof on which it was built was part of a respectable architectural choice but this was not truly asserted from the outset and even less publicly justified.

This account attests to some of the difficulties plaguing participatory processes.³⁶ First of all, it shows that the limits of the 'subject' of the debate were not clearly established. Basically, the problem was one of determining what was truly up for debate and what was 'non-negotiable', what could stem from aesthetic and architectural judgments already made. In such a case, does organising consultation serve merely to 'legitimate' choices that have already been made or to 'defuse' contestation, with, in the final analysis, an 'initial' and a 'final' project that are identical

in all but name? What is more, it also raises questions about the procedural stakes involved. Is it a matter of collecting and juxtaposing opinions? Doesn't a *concertation* process mean supporting debate, exploring points of controversy and putting forward arguments in order to reach an agreement or at least an 'agreement on the disagreements'? We see here quite clearly the opposition between a participation-based approach and another approach that is built around deliberation. In the case that interests us, the diverging opinions did not truly have an opportunity to confront each other. This definitely increased the risk of feeding the frustrations of the participants. Moreover, this uncertainty about the procedure and the weights of their voices was compounded by another sizable unknown for all the players: the weight that the principles of the structure plan itself carried in the actual building projects to come.

Lightweight principles?

A 'commission de concertation' (which can be translated as a 'concerted information, consultation and dialogue commission') meeting about the 'Building C renovation permit' introduced by the owners was held on 25 September 2007. To sum up, this renovation would increase the

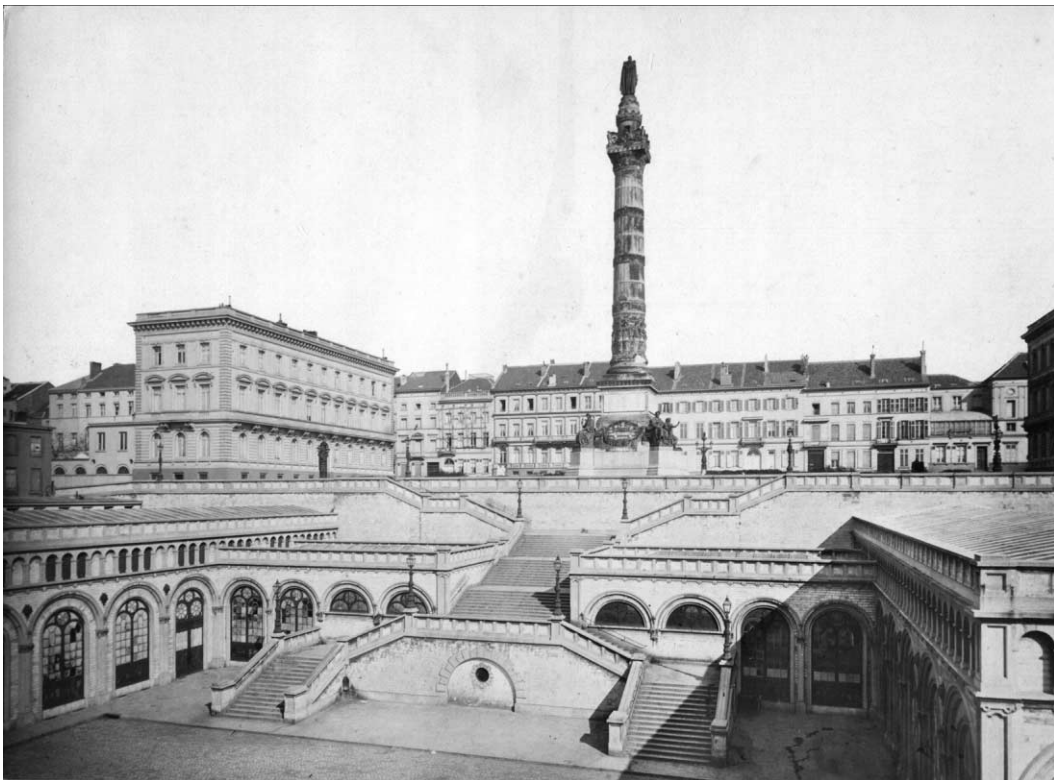


Figure 4. The ancient monumental Cluysenaar's stairways and market (achieved in 1857) that were destroyed to build the CAE (1958–1983).

Source: Archives de la Ville de Bruxelles.



Figure 5. The CAE site in 1984.
Source: Archives d'Architecture Moderne, Bruxelles.

square footage proposed for offices. After the project was presented to the commission by the private promoters and their architects, the audience was given the floor. BRAL and the 'representative of a group of residents' (as he introduced himself) shared their worries with the group. First of all, BRAL expressed its wish to have the structure plan's recommendations (especially those about the site's mixed functions) and proposals taken into account. Its spokesperson stressed the ineffectiveness of parallel procedures that would not coincide or even diverge. The owners and their architects did not contradict this point of view. They simply asked for the matter to move forward. The arguments used were market logic, that is, 'time is money'. The residents' 'representative' also regretted the lack of an overall plan and reminded the group that 'the residents' did not want another tower on the site. The more one

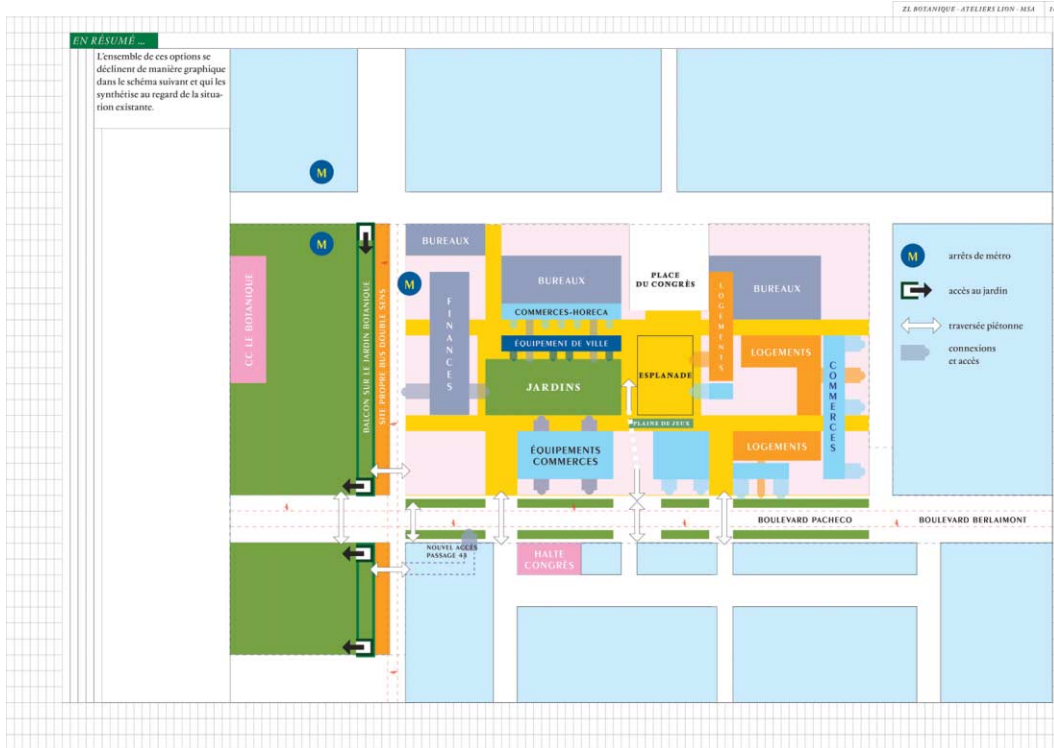


Figure 6. The 2006 structure plan.
Source: MSA/Ateliers Lions.

increased the square footage of offices on the site, he said, the more the goal of setting aside 35% of the space for residential use looked like an impossible dream.³⁷

This example³⁸ shows that accepting the structure plan did not prevent the history of town planning from following its course. Permit applications were reviewed almost independently from the principles enshrined in the said structure plan. Months of work, public consultations, bitter negotiations and plan development could thus be contested by older and more binding procedures.³⁹ This situation points to various elements. First of all, the increase in the number of legal instruments that surround spatial planning has amplified the complexity of the rules in this area, with time frames that can overlap, without having settled the many questions that exist as to the hierarchy of these rules and instruments.⁴⁰ Moreover, we see here the rise of law based on guiding principles rather than being based solely on fixed rules. As a 'new planning tool',⁴¹ the 'structure plan' is an instrument without binding force. This was said right from the start: it is devoid of compulsory force and merely sets the 'options for interventions' and means required. The specifics must then be set in other regional and local planning and development plans.

Historically, the very use of the term 'schéma' reveals the wish to place regional planning and development policies in a category of more flexible management and decision-making procedures. This trend is characterised more broadly by the emergence of 'neo-modern' public

policy law or a type of law that is ‘more flexible, fuzzier, more complex and much less predictable’.⁴² Some authors even talk about ‘networks’ which aligns itself *de facto* with the renewed forms of public action.⁴³ Of course, the theme of cooperative governance is in tune with this analysis. It, too, speaks of this flexibility, this less binding, ‘softer’ law, and underlines its consequences, in terms of a loss of readability, dilution of responsibility and decline of opposability.⁴⁴ In such a context, under what conditions is the consensus that is created amongst the decision’s stakeholders actually a consensus? How can it be heeded and upheld? And how could it be made opposable to third parties as long as it keeps the soft shape of general principles, the implementation of which is often put off to a more or less indeterminate future?

Conclusion: a hybrid or mitigated plan

When measured by the yardstick of the theoretical debates mentioned earlier, the above-mentioned elements seem indeed to draw the process of developing the ‘Botanique’ structure plan closer to the casting of a new form of urban governance that tries to incorporate, in a minor mode, certain participatory and deliberative practices.

First of all, the stage described as ‘participatory’ is totally seconded by another, dominated by the principle of multi-level governance,⁴⁵ which is achieved through the tripartite, bilateral, and support committee meetings. Beyond what distinguishes them in terms of the parties involved and impacts on the decision-making process, all of these bodies share the fact that they aim to get the public and private players to sit around the same table. Given the complexity of the Belgian institutional system in general and the Brussels institutional system in particular, we must stress that this in itself is a feat. It seems, moreover, that the structure plan helped to create an epistemic ‘community’ of public players sharing the same cognitive frameworks and even the inklings of a constructive dialogue between these public players and private forces, despite or perhaps through the very play of clearly opposing interests working in opposite directions. In this way, the administrations, politicians, promoters and experts shared the stage – including the wings – where attempts were made to decide on what could be called a ‘neo-neocorporatist’⁴⁶ way of working.

At the same time, ‘participation’ made only a timid foray into the scheme. Its role was not ensured by a strong mobilisation inside or on the fringes of the procedure. We must indeed point out that participation was directed above all towards the individual residents. Most of the associations active in town planning matters took very little part in the scheme (except perhaps at its outcome, whether to praise the scheme or, at the opposite, to criticise it virulently). The participatory procedure did not give itself the means to spawn a ‘civic opposition force’⁴⁷ capable of dialogue and collective resistance, creativity in the proposed solutions and openness to cooperation. This was doubtless due to the lack, given the site’s location and history, of a locally mobilised public prior to the launch of the structure plan’s development.⁴⁸ As a result, citizen participation was an almost exclusively ‘top down’ initiative. That being so, the actual place of participation in this situation hung on by two threads: that of an association – whether an intermediary or mediator – that had the status of only a temporary guest, that of rapporteur, on the ‘decision-making stage’, and that of the urban planner upon which rested not only the definition of the methodology and magnitude of the public strand but also the weights to be assigned in the project’s design to specific concerns, wishes and criticisms expressed by the residents. That shows how little the people’s various types of knowledge were actually mobilised and

reveals the secondary, even minor, role given to the procedure's participatory dimension, aside from the abundant lip service paid to participation in the various speeches.

We note that the opacity of the procedure itself also came in for the criticism that was often levelled at the new practices associated with 'governance'. Here the lack of readability of the various phases, the patent lack of transparency as to their content and, generally speaking, the lack of clarification of certain crucial questions come to mind. We summarise these questions one last time: who decides what in which forum, when, how and why? The result was a great doubt about whether the 'public' or the 'people' necessarily had a stronger say in what was going on than within the framework of the traditional institutions of representative democracy. However, whilst it was not the 'laypeople's' job to participate in making the decisions about the 'major guidelines' enshrined in the structure plan, here the experts and politicians were potentially supposed to justify, almost in real time, the options that they chose. This was incontestably an innovation. That is why it would doubtless have been preferable, if only for the purpose of clearly shouldered legitimacy, for the political players to have assumed the essentially informative dimension of the public strand of the procedure.

Finally, everything seems to attest to the great weakness of the deliberative principles and practices in this first implementation of the structure plan scheme. It is not a matter of touting the utopia of deliberation or of denying that there is anything good about conflict. The problem here is that the parties implicitly banked on the merits of a deliberative procedure without giving themselves the necessary means to carry it out successfully. So, the disputes between players were not smoothed out, for the differences of viewpoints and conflicts of interest effectively did not appear to be dissected, never mind confronted. At the very most, they were partly exposed. Constructing agreement appeared to be the structure plan's reason for being, since, through the flexibility of its modalities and its non-binding nature, the structure plan was supposed to make it possible to envision the various solutions with cool heads and for them to discuss the disagreements in order to achieve a solid *consensus*. As a result, the disagreements in question were simply transposed to the ulterior decision-making stage. At this stage, the existence of an approved structure plan carries effective weight beyond its non-regulatory nature, for it cannot be ignored completely. Still, it is rather a light constraint or weight in line with the fragility of the consensus on which it is founded with regard to the private investors and the fragility of the ordinary citizens' participation.

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Notes

1. For a complete and comprehensive view on Brussels' planning history in social aspects, see Thierry Demey, *Bruxelles. Chronique d'une capitale en chantier. Tome 1: Du voûtement de la Senne à la jonction Nord-Midi* (Bruxelles: CFC-Éditions/Paul Legrain, 1990); Demey, *Tome 2: De l'Expo '58 au siège de la CEE* (Bruxelles: Paul Legrain, 1992); Christian Dessouroux et le CIRHI-BRU, eds., *Espaces partagés, espaces disputés. Bruxelles: une capitale et ses habitants* (Bruxelles: Administration de l'Aménagement du Territoire et du Logement de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, 2008).
2. For a broader presentation of the case itself, see Florence Delmotte and Michel Hubert, eds., *La Cité administrative de l'État: Schémas directeurs et action publique à Bruxelles, Les Cahiers de La Cambre Architecture n°8*, (Bruxelles: La Lettre volée, 2009).
3. *Plan Régional de Développement* (Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, 2002), 1st priority.
4. Charles Picqué, President-Minister of the Brussels-Capital Region; Press conference on 17 October 2006.
5. As Bertrand Pâques, *Aménagement du territoire: Planification* (Bruxelles: Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis, 2005: 7sq.), points out, the notion of a 'schéma' (plan or outline 'with an indicative value') arose in the 1980s, as part of a set of initiatives that were launched first by the local authorities, and was opposed to the notion of a 'plan' (with 'regulatory' value). The *schéma* was supposed to correct certain flaws inherent in 'plans' *per se*, especially their lack of flexibility and thus their increasingly clear inability to allow for the changing nature of contemporary town planning and regional planning and development (or 'spatial planning'). The various *schémas* or other *schémas directeurs* ('structure plans') have thus been considered for the past score of years to be 'second-generation plans' that are rooted in 'operational or active planning' and reveal the importance of the 'political' dimension, especially because they often concern not only 'regional planning and development *per se*' but also 'venture into fields specific to the economy, social affairs, and the environment'.
6. See Maurizio Cohen and Marie-Françoise Plissart, *À Bruxelles, près de chez nous: L'architecture dans les contrats de quartier* (Bruxelles: Ministère de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, 2007).
7. See <http://www.atelierslion.com>; <http://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/Yves-LION-Grand-Prix-de-l.html>.
8. See Ateliers Lion Architectes Urbanistes and MSA, *Schéma Directeur Zone Levier n°6 Botanique*, November 2006, which can be consulted at <http://www.cae-rac.be/>.
9. Ateliers Lion Architectes Urbanistes and MSA, *Schéma Directeur Zone Levier n°6 Botanique*, 5sq.
10. *Schéma Directeur Zone Levier n°6 Botanique*, 7.
11. *Schéma Directeur Zone Levier n°6 Botanique*, 7.
12. Here we found our position on the interview (Brussels, autumn 2006) of Benoit Moritz, from MSA, and the speech he gave at 'La Cambre', School of Architecture (Brussels, March 2007). At this occasion, he spoke more precisely about the three 'phases' that marked the recent history of Brussels town planning: first that of 'technocratic' town planning, then that of 'consultative' town planning and finally that of 'participatory' town planning. In the last one, the idea is not just to 'inform' and 'consult' but to deliberate and even to 'co-produce' things with all of the parties involved. That intuition was systematised as the notion of the 'second turning point' in reference to the (first) turning point discerned by Jacques Aron, *Le tournant de l'urbanisme bruxellois. 1958–1978* (Brussels: Fondation Joseph Jacquemotte, 1978).
13. Avis de marché No. 8400, Ministère de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, *Bulletin des adjudications* (24 June 2005), 8342–6.
14. Ministère de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale, Administration de l'aménagement du territoire et du logement, *Cahier spécial des charges relatif à l'élaboration du schéma directeur de la zone levier n° 6 'Botanique'*.
15. Michel Delnoy, 'Définition, notion de base, raison d'être et sources juridiques des procédures de participation du public', in *La participation du public au processus de décision en matière d'environnement et d'urbanisme*, ed. Benoit Jadot (Brussels: Bruylant, 2005), 7–28.
16. This notion refers in Belgium to multipartite information, dialogue and deliberation aimed at achieving a common position or 'compromis'.
17. See, for example, one of Loïc Blondiaux's articles denouncing this cynical position, for example, Blondiaux, 'Prendre au sérieux l'idéal délibératif: un programme de recherche', *Revue suisse de science politique* 10, no. 4 (2004): 158–69.

18. Jacques Donzelot and Renaud Epstein, 'Démocratie et participation: l'exemple de la rénovation urbaine', *Esprit* no. 326 (July 2006): 5–34.
19. Sherry Arnstein, 'A ladder of citizen participation', *Journal of American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (1969): 216–24.
20. Donzelot and Epstein, 'Démocratie et participation', 7.
21. Kathrin Braun and Suzanne Schultz, 'Pure publics and embodied expertise. Participatory governance arrangements in the area of human genetics' (paper presented at the ECPR General Conference, Pisa, September 2007).
22. Frank Fischer, 'Citizen Deliberation and the Problem of Expertise: Resituating Knowledge in Practical Reason', in *La situation délibérative dans le débat public*, vol. 1., ed. Bernard Castagna, Sylvain Gallais, Pascal Ricaud and Jean-Philippe Roy (Tours: Presses Universitaires François-Rabelais, 2004), 87.
23. John Stuart Mill and Carole Pateman are usually considered to be the main classical political thinkers representing this school.
24. Jon Elster, 'The market and the forum: Three varieties of political theories', in *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*, ed. James Bohman and William Rehg (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), 3.
25. Loïc Blondiaux and Yves Sintomer, 'L'impératif délibératif', *Politix* 57 (2002): 17–35.
26. Alban Bouvier, 'Démocratie délibérative, démocratie débattante, démocratie participative', *Revue européenne des sciences sociales XLV*, no. 136 (2007): 5.
27. Joshua Cohen quoted in Jürgen Habermas, *Droit et démocratie, Entre faits et normes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 330 [*Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996].
28. Bouvier 'Démocratie délibérative', 5–34.
29. See Olivier Paye, 'La gouvernance: d'une notion polysémique à un concept politologique', *Études internationales XXXVI*, no. 1 (March 2005): 13–40.
30. See Corinne Gobin, 'Gouvernance', in *Les nouveaux mots du pouvoir: Abécédaire critique*, ed. Patrice Durand (Bruxelles: Aden, 2007), 262–7.
31. Claudette Lafaye, 'Gouvernance et démocratie: quelles reconfigurations?', in *La démocratie à l'épreuve de la gouvernance*, ed. Caroline Andrew and Linda Cardinal (Ottawa: Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 2001), 57–86. For more on this subject, see as well Yannis Papadoulos, 'Is "Governance" a Form of "Deliberative Democracy"?' (ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, Turin, March 22–27, 2002) and Yannis Papadopoulos and Philippe Warin, 'Are Innovative, Participatory and Deliberative Procedures in Policy Making Democratic and Effective?', *European Journal of Political Research* 46, no. 4 (2007): 445–72.
32. Loïc Blondiaux, 'La délibération, norme de l'action publique contemporaine?', *Projet*, no. 268 (winter 2001–2002): 86.
33. Blondiaux and Sintomer, 'L'impératif délibératif', 29.
34. On the distinction between deliberations *stricto sensu* and informal processes of building public opinion, see Habermas, *Droit et démocratie*, 332.
35. Marcus Andre Melo and Gianpaolo Baiocchi, 'Deliberative Democracy and Local Governance: Towards a New Agenda', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30, no. 3 (September 2006): 590.
36. See, for example, the issue of *Politix* on participatory schemes: *Dispositifs participatifs*, *Politix* 19, no. 75 (2006).
37. It sets a good example of a recurrent theme of town planning in Brussels: the request of building housing in compensation for office floor spaces. In the case of the CAE, 35% of housing are, moreover, compulsory because the *Plan régional d'affectation du sol* (PRAS, Regional Soil Use Plan, which has a regulatory value) had defined the CAE complex as a 'regional interest area' (*zone d'intérêt régional* or 'ZIR') before the site was embodied in the leverage area Botanique defined by the regional development plan (which has a more programmatic and indicative value).
38. This is not an isolated example. Other 'commissions de concertation' concerning the renovation of the CAE have been held since September 2007. They concerned other buildings ('D' and 'F'). Here, too, the town planning permit applications were submitted in 2006, that is, close to three years after the buildings changed hands.

39. The structure plan was indeed consolidated in the form of a regional government decree in June 2007. However, it must be followed up by a PPAS (*Plan particulier d'affectation du Sol* or Special Soil Use Plan) that the City of Brussels must draw up in order to make the structure plan's proposals binding. The problem lies in the telescoping of procedures (the structure plan and PPAS on the one hand and permit applications on the other hand) with different time frames: the applications were submitted before the structure plan was finalised, their review phases are shorter than the time required to develop a PPAS and so on.
40. The prospective and political nature of such a tool also raises questions as to its scope. For example, does it apply to private individuals? This question is not as theoretical as it may be seen. In Flanders, the law identifies the legal subjects to which the compulsory parts of the plans apply (Pâques, *Aménagement du territoire*).
41. Administration de l'Aménagement du territoire et du logement, *Rapport annuel 2006*, http://www.bruxelles.irisnet.be/fr/region/region_de_bruxelles-capitale/ministere_de_la_region_de_bruxelles_capitale/competences_et_organisation/amenagement_du_territoire_et_logement.shtml (accessed February 12, 2010).
42. Charles-Albert Morand, *Le droit néo-moderne des politiques publiques* (Paris: LGDJ, 1999), 189.
43. *Ibid*, 16.
44. Yannis Papadopoulos, 'Cooperative Forms of Governance: Problems of Democratic Accountability in Complex Environments', *European Journal of Political Research*, 42 (2003): 473–501.
45. See, for example, Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, *Multi-Level Governance and European Integration* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).
46. According to the classic definition of the term 'neocorporatist' that can be found in, for example, Philippe Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch, eds., *Trends Toward Corporatist Intermediation* (London: Sage, 1979).
47. Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, 'Le contre-pouvoir dans la démocratie participative et délibérative', in *Gestion de proximité et démocratie participative. Une perspective comparative*, ed. Marie-Hélène Bacqué, Henry Rey and Yves Sintomer (Paris: La Découverte, 2005), 49–80.
48. The various collectives that mobilised in favour of the site in 2003–2004, motivated by the extra-local interests that the CAE represented (its architecture, its location, etc.), headed for other battles after the owners refused their requests to occupy the premises. The trust that these collectives had in MSA (the urban planning agency in charge) and BRAL (the association organising the participation), which were close to them, may also explain their demobilisation.