



Social values and social infrastructures: a multi-perspective approach to place

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ABSTRACT

The village of Duved in northern Sweden faces rapid transformation related to the tourism industry, including new housing and recreational facilities in the mountains. Existing places with inherent social values that play a key role in supporting local identity are threatened as they are not sufficiently recognised or protected by the planning process. This study focuses on how significant places with social values, and the system of such places that form a social infrastructure, may be identified and recognised through a multi-perspective approach including a creative mapping process. Information from different stakeholders about places with social values is documented and analysed. The approach includes three different perspectives on places affording social values: planning documents, the officials' perspective and the citizens' perspective. The mapping method makes intangible knowledge visible and reveals the multifunctionality of places, and the map constitutes the medium for such a process. It can contribute to developing democratic planning processes that support the empowerment of the population and help professionals to integrate knowledge about social value into plans, thus preserving fragile but essential qualities through future development.

PRACTICE RELEVANCE

Centring on the ongoing rapid transformation of Duved village in northern Sweden, this study focuses on how significant places with social values may be identified, recognised and preserved. Places affording social value, important for sustaining local communities and wellbeing, are often insufficiently acknowledged in times of forceful urban development. These oversights can have devastating consequences for the existing social qualities. The creative mapping approach captures three perspectives to identify significant places affording social values. In this way, maps translate intangible knowledge into analytic methods of planning. The result may support the integration of fragile but essential qualities into plans and policies and is a way forward to acknowledge and preserve key places in future urban development.

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1. INTRODUCTION: MAPPING PLACES AFFORDING SOCIAL VALUE

Duved is a village in northern Sweden with about 700 inhabitants. It is heavily dependent on ski tourism as part of the very popular winter destination Åre Valley, where the small town of Åre is the main centre for tourism. (The Åre municipality comprises 120,000 inhabitants.) Today, Duved is facing rapid development driven by the tourism industry. Places of importance for producing and sustaining local communities are at risk of being insufficiently acknowledged in times of urban transformation (Lindberg *et al.* 2001). Several of these places are not recognised for their added social values and not adequately established in planning documents. Arguably, such values are even more at risk in a small village in a rural setting, when embedded in often nondescript places, buildings and environments. This study focuses on how significant places with social values, and their interconnection in a *social infrastructure*, may be identified and recognised. It departs from an architectural-planning perspective, aiming to increase the understanding of how to identify places of significance as well as how to recognise them in planning documents, and thus give them legal acknowledgment.

In rural villages, the number of amenities that can accommodate social processes are often few, making them especially vulnerable to planning interventions (Björling 2016). Therefore, it is crucial to develop tools that can identify and help safeguard the social value of places (Högström *et al.* 2022). Non-urban areas often lack typical cultural institutions such as museums and theatres. Studies that look beyond traditional cultural institutions identify the importance of other institutions, e.g. community houses and centres for local history, places argued to contribute to a democratisation of culture and potentially may play a role in urban development (Mager & Wagner 2022).

There is an impending risk in times of transition that the awareness of key amenities, highly important for everyday life, arises first as people face up to its loss. In Åre, development is found to generate gains for some and losses for others, where tourists gain from expansion while their gains do not outweigh the net losses for residents, where the development of welfare as a whole is negative (Lindberg *et al.* 2001).

The aim of the Duved study is to explore a method that can decode places that are part of the social infrastructure, and to find a language through which the locally situated knowledge (Hatleskog & Samuel 2021) can be translated into authorities' planning tools and systems. The information from both respondents and planning documents is transferred into maps that become a tool for mediating and putting different sources on an equal footing. The intention is to develop this method to include the outcomes of such bottom-up multimodal investigations into authorities' processes, to support informed decisions and acknowledge the social values' potential for fostering a sustainable community.

This study is part of the research project Duved Model Initiative (2019–22) (Duvedmodellen n.d.) that aims to provide local community participation and empowerment. Its purpose is not only fostering engagement in transformation processes but also a long-term building of local engagement, from the generation of ideas to actively taking part in the implementation (Hellström 2022).

2. BACKGROUND AND THEORY

The Duved population fluctuates significantly with the tourist seasons in the Åre Valley. The high seasons show an influx of about 45,000 people in high seasons, accommodated in hotels and second homes. In total, there are 7206 housing units and 5572 second homes (2022). This mirrors a significant increase of units during the last decade, 22% and 16%, respectively. A third of the population works within tourism and a third works within the public sector.

According to the United Nations' New Urban Agenda, cultural dimensions need to be integrated into urban planning to meet its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations 2016). This includes cultural heritage buildings and environments, but also cultural diversity and cultural

practices. Such places of broad cultural relevance are, however, not always easy to trace and identify (Drescher *et al.* 2019). Following Johnston (1992), places that can be expected to hold social values are, for example, places where people gather and act as a community, but it could also be a place that provides an essential reference point in a community's identity, e.g. something that contributes to its historical grounding. The present study is primarily interested in studying social values related to places and buildings associated with common benefits. Some of these afford cultural heritage values (listed buildings and environments), but that is not a precondition for being taken into consideration.

The authors are especially indebted to Samuel & Hatleskog (2020) who discuss architecture's role in improving people's lives and, more specifically, their interest in the potential of social value as an instrument for change of the built environment. Their call for creative methods of how to map, measure and establish places associated with social value of communities has influenced the present study. Such places are not only argued to be of importance for shaping a sense of belonging but also carry a potential to become essential in inclusive processes of urban change (Petcou & Petrescu 2015). Riechers *et al.* (2016) have shown how cultural ecosystems are perceived differently by experts and laypersons, therefore the reliance here is on cultural value assessment by experts but it is sought to equate these with social values as defined by the general public.

The present study also draws on Oldenburg's (1989) concept of 'third place', which contrary to the home and the workplace includes places that facilitate an arena for community life, e.g. churches, cafés, public libraries and parks. 'Third place' is argued to foster broader interaction important for civil society, democracy and civic engagement. This is similar to what Putnam refers to as 'bonding' and 'bridging', emphasising the reciprocity of social relations and their importance for a cohesive and well-functioning democratic society (Putnam 2000, Putnam *et al.* 1993).

What places are associated with social value, and where do social arenas emerge? Johnston (1992) identified four categories of places that are important for developing ties to places and to a community: public spaces including streetscapes, places of 'meeting', places of 'resort', and public entertainment as well as 'communities'. However, these categories can be understood as contextual, and not necessarily adequate in other geographies or cultures; what is perceived as an important place or amenity in one context may not be associated with social value in other cities (Jahre *et al.* 2022). Further, the types of places carrying social values may vary considerably between urban places (the focus of Johnston) and rural areas (Drescher *et al.* 2019). Sebastien (2020) discusses the importance of physical and concrete places in relation to attachments and meanings, arguing that a qualitative approach contributes to a deeper understanding of how people relate to places through interviews and analysis including clustering according to the perception of respondents.

The understanding of *place* employed in this study is that it is a set of spaces perceived as a meaningful location through peoples' experiences and ideas (Leonard 2013), and some of them may emerge into social arenas. Social arenas are often found in places with different primary functions, e.g. the library, the grocery shop, the sports association or the church (Oldenburg 1989; Klinenberg 2018). According to Latham & Layton (2019), there are two categories of social infrastructure: first, places for social care (schools, healthcare centres, etc.); and second, public spaces hosting urban–social life. Public spaces—streets, parks, squares—where people regularly encounter each other are key places for supporting social processes (Legeby 2013; Vaughan *et al.* 2010), and are places essential for acknowledging 'the other' (Amin 2012). Similarly, places important from a social sustainability perspective often hold multiple uses and benefits. For example, a grocery store in a rural village is not only important for its primary use (providing food) but also may become an important arena for social updating, communication and coordination—a liaison office of sorts. Figure 1 shows the main street in Duved village.



Figure 1: Karolinervägen, the main road in Duved village.

2. METHOD AND MATERIAL

This project was highly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the research activities had to be continuously adjusted. The co-creation process originally planned had to be modified and interviews partly transferred to digital meetings. Neither could observations on site be carried out. Nevertheless, a few site visits were still conducted as well as one public meeting.

In Duved, the intention was to identify different perspectives and lived experiences relating to place and social value through mapping procedures. An explorative approach was applied to collect information from different stakeholders about which places they found to be of importance to sustain and develop the local community. The term ‘significant places’ was used with several subcategories.¹ This terminology intended to broaden the understanding of social places beyond the explicitly programmed meeting places. The study neither promotes nor discourages urban development, but merely observes the ongoing densification of the village and aims to contribute to an increased awareness for key places in the village that have importance for community cohesion and identity processes.

The method is inspired by so-called cultural mapping (Pillai 2013; Bianchini 1999; Bianchini & Ghilardi 2007). According to Freitas (2016), cultural mapping is a mechanism to promote development and may be either driven top-down or bottom-up. While investigating both professionals’ and residents’ perspectives, it could be argued that this study combines the top-down with the bottom-up. This allows the collection of individual perceptions relating to the values ascribed to places and buildings.

Information collected represented three perspectives: (1) official plans related to planning and development (with legal impact); (2) municipality officials with different areas of responsibility; and (3) inhabitants and locally engaged people. Different survey methods were combined to identify and evaluate the built environment from a social point of view:

- Web-based map questionnaire, a so-called public participation geographical information system (PPGIS) survey (Brown & Kytä 2014). The questionnaire was designed by the researchers but launched by the municipality through its communication channels. It was open for everyone and stayed open for three months.² Respondents marked on a map the places they found important for society as well as the places they appreciated and visited, and those they avoided. In addition, they provided information on *why* they used (or avoided) the places and what social values they ascribed them.³ The result from the PPGIS survey includes 155 responses and a total of 696 mapped places in the Åre municipality (for a detailed description, see Legeby *et al.* 2021).⁴ In addition, one public meeting in the local padel hall included an exhibition. It attracted about 40 visitors of different ages. In all, 26 interviews focusing on key places were carried out on-site and documented (also by marking on maps). The meeting was prepared by the researchers. Åre municipality announced and sent out invitations through its communication channels.

- Eleven interviews were carried out with officials identified as relevant in collaboration with the municipality as part of the overall co-creation process of the Duved Model Initiative (Duvedmodellén n.d.), two cultural heritage experts at the regional level, and nine officials at the municipality representing different departments, e.g. culture, sport and recreation, libraries, digitalisation as well as business and industry. The interviews were combined with an integrated mapping procedure, noting important places on a map as well as documenting *why* the informants found them important and having social values.⁵
- In parallel, a selection of planning documents and programmes was analysed to target places and buildings highlighted as important from a socio-cultural perspective. Documentation of natural and cultural heritage sites carried out by national or regional authorities/experts was also reviewed.

Through the creative mapping process, different stakeholders' perspectives, lived experiences as well as official data were translated into maps to become visually readable and quantifiable, *i.e.* the logic of planning institutions.

Of course, several more perspectives are at play. One critical group is visitors, which were omitted in this study (some voices may have been recorded by the questionnaire). Here, the study was guided by the overall design of the Duved Model Initiative (Duvedmodellén n.d.), which aims to foster local co-creation processes, and occasional visitors were therefore not selected as a category of informants. A group of citizens that the project did not specifically target is the relatively large number of inhabitants newly arrived in Sweden, mainly refugees who settled in Duved after 2015. Their needs and wellbeing are reflected in the officials' responses (see Section 3.2) as an unresolved topic. In a potential development of this survey, a more sophisticated design that can take into consideration parameters such as ethnicity may be motivated, as they may affect the perception of social value in relationship to space. However, it is uncertain if a small village such as Duved can offer any statistically solid results.

In sum, for a limited study, these three perspectives (official plans, officials' assessment and citizen's experiences) served well to start exploring what a multi-perspective approach potentially may add.

3. RESULTS: INVESTIGATING THREE PERSPECTIVES

3.1 REVIEW OF PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

3.1.1 The Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan for Åre municipality authored by the planning department was adopted in 2017 (Åre Kommun 2017). The municipality is highly dependent on tourism, primarily revenues from the winter season; however, the summer season is growing, resulting in ever fewer low-season periods (Nilsson 2003). The plan suggests future development in connection with five existing villages in the Åre Valley. The overall aim is to avoid further sprawl and to act more responsibly with natural capital and ecosystem values. Moreover, places that are sensitive from an environmental perspective should, according to the plan, be exempted from exploitation altogether and ecosystem services should be integrated into the design.

The plan prescribes that new development should have mixed functions, a well-designed open space accessible for all, and provide recreation close to residential units, space for ecosystem services as well as places for encounters and gatherings (Åre Kommun 2017: 40–43). Permanent housing is prioritised before second homes. Tourist-related development in Duved is directed to the northern part of the village. Despite directives about protecting ecosystems and outdoor recreation, the plan still selects sensitive land on the mountain slopes for housing development, units that will be car dependent as these slopes are difficult to provide with public transportation. According to the plan, no new development is accepted on agricultural land. Accessibility for walking, biking and public transportation is prioritised. It is explicitly specified that buildings identified as having cultural heritage, aesthetic or environmental value are to be unaltered and should be protected. According to the plan, buildings important for their cultural heritage should be valued based on

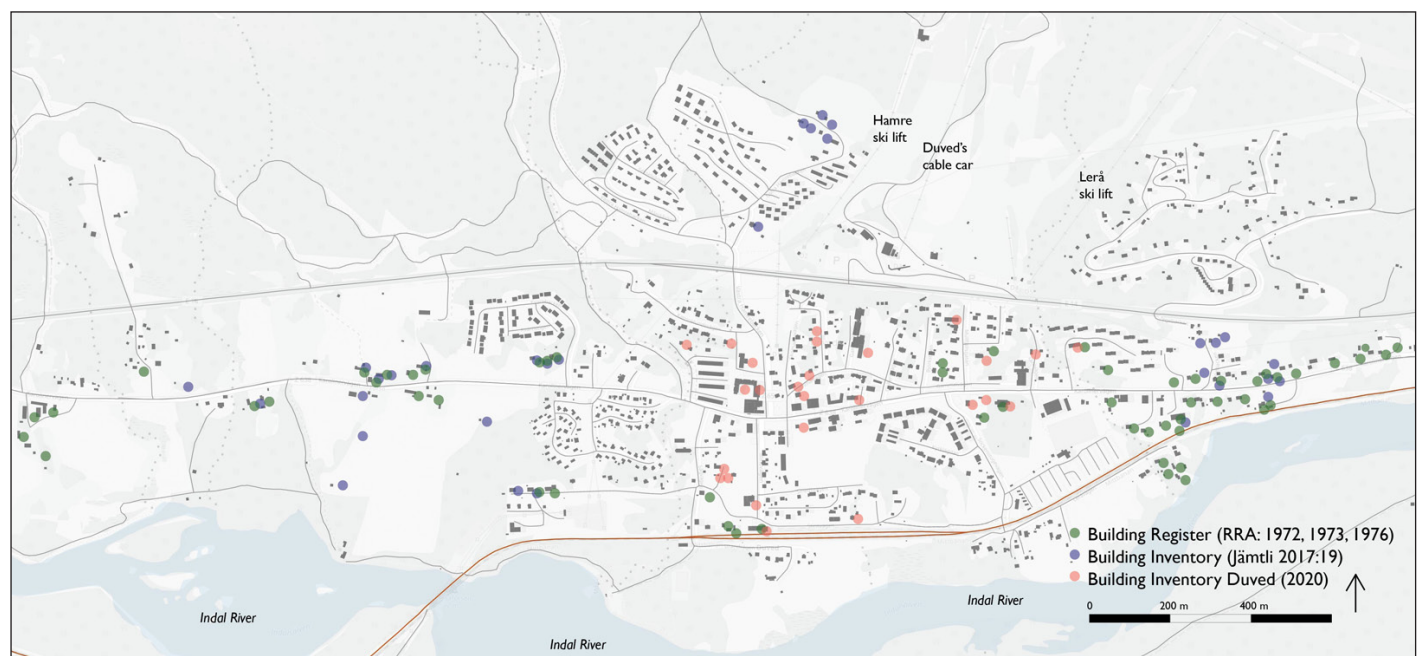
their potential to visualise the history of the community and the landscape as well as its functions. Only places and buildings listed in cultural heritage programmes are addressed, while other places that constitute the social infrastructure lack such status of protection despite having—evidenced by the present study—documented social values. Examples of such places are the park in the village core or the football field. A result of how the plan is formulated, with few concretely marked places and limited protection of open space and places important for the local community, we see that recent developments and future plans introduce a new character in terms of building density and scale, an exploitation of public space (e.g. the village park), as well as suggesting cultural heritage buildings be torn down (e.g. Plan Program; Åre Kommun 2021).

3.1.2 Cultural Environment Program

The Cultural Environment Program (Tyréns & Åre Kommun 2020) of the municipality, formulated by experts, identifies and describes buildings and environments with cultural values. It is an amalgamation of authorities' and consultants' previous heritage assessments combined with information collected from property owners, local associations, representatives of the tourism industry, etc. The programme divides the village into its historically established areas, which to some extent represent different cultural environments, e.g. Forsa's agricultural traits and farm buildings, central Duved's historical layers of buildings or the Mullfjället mountain's archaeological remains and traces of pasture. It identifies the thoroughfare road Karolinervägen, which stretches across Duved east to west, as a historically noteworthy component, worthy of preservation in its own right. The programme also notes that records of the Indigenous Sami heritage are lacking in older documentation of the area. The programme is limited to objects and environments with cultural heritage values, of which some may also have social values. Places with social values that lack cultural heritage values are consequently not part of these programmes.

For the existing built heritage, data entries and inventories from national and regional authorities (e.g. Fornsök—Riksantikvarieämbetet n.d.; Riksantikvarieämbetet n.d.; Ylikoski 2017) are not published in any one accessible database. Thus, the research team produced a map where documentation from the Swedish National Heritage Board (archaeological sites and historic buildings of a certain age), the regional heritage authority (Ylikoski 2017), and the heritage inventories commissioned by the local authorities (Tyréns 2020) were merged. Combining these assessments on one map was a simple but visually striking manoeuvre that immediately quantified the wealth of the village's cultural history and made it legible to visitors and inhabitants of Duved (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Overview of objects included in documents listing cultural heritage, defined and selected by experts.



The majority of the municipal officials interviewed agreed in general on the most significant places: the functions gathered along the main street (Karolinervägen), especially the local (and only) grocery store, the school and the church. The sport field (indoor and outdoor facilities) was frequently mentioned, as was the base camp of the skiing area and the railway station. For the different subcategories of places of significance—daily life, networking and community updating, local identity, communication, education, recreation businesses, and general meeting places—answers varied more according to the official's area of expertise. However, the importance of the school (for the stated reason of education) and the mountain/river (for the stated reason of recreation and tourism) was unmistakable. Noticeably, the officials highlighted primarily places where the municipality has a strong engagement, e.g. the school and sport facilities.

But what is lacking from a social perspective, according to the informants? And what do they fear that the extensive developments in the near future will do to Duved's social life? Some of the most telling input concerns the less obvious or less programmed places. More open meeting places are called for, as well as places for indoor cultural activities. The non-descript centrally located left-out space which is commonly known as Kärleksparken (The Love Park) is identified as an important part of the social infrastructure, a meeting place not tied to any specific organised activity. Rather than having the function of an urban park, this lawn-covered piece of land adjacent to the main road is the closest Duved comes to a town square. The development plan (2021) proposes to develop Kärleksparken and offers no other open space to compensate. The informants identify the village main road as a social place that gathers people—locals and visitors alike—who cross it, walk or travel along it for different purposes. To improve the main roads' social function, the officials note the need for a technical update—lighting, pavements and cycling lanes. A particular challenge noted by the officials is how to socially integrate the newly arrived immigrants who constitute a relatively large but diverse group in the community. Especially in winter, the older generation amongst them rarely use Duved's important social outdoor places such as the skiing facilities. For their social wellbeing, indoor meeting places for organised activities are considered all the more important. In addition to physical places of social importance, also digital meeting places were mentioned, such as 'Duved tycker om dig' (Duved Likes You, managed by Duved Village Association. (n.d.)) and various Facebook groups.

Apart from the church, the officials mentioned very few places with documented cultural values, despite the fact that Duved is rich in heritage sites and buildings (Figure 2). It is especially striking that not even culturally significant places that are connected to tourism are mentioned, e.g. the medieval pilgrimage route, buildings of the skiing facilities, hotels and hostels (Figure 3).

A general concern facing the future development of Duved is that qualities that attract people to move to Duved in the first place are threatened by expansion and growing population. The natural values are threatened by wear and tear, and the social identity of a small village, which is spatially relatively compacted and has a manageable number of permanent residents, is at risk. The heritage experts at Jamtli particularly stress the importance of maintaining the small scale of the built environment, the village's character, pointing to the decades-long exploitation of Åre as an undesired direction (in some places even overdeveloped and aesthetically fragmented). Distinctly social considerations form part of this assessment, too, as they mention certain characteristics of Duved's youth culture (clothing, free-time activities) that arose from a desire to markedly distinguish themselves from Åre—to be what residents and visitors to Åre are *not*.

To summarise, from a social point of view, the officials especially mark places important for informal gatherings and those that perform as arenas for particular communities. Places associated with the village identity and/or link back to different historical eras were not mentioned to the same extent. However, the officials are concerned that the Sami heritage and the present-day presence of the Indigenous population are not part of Duved today.

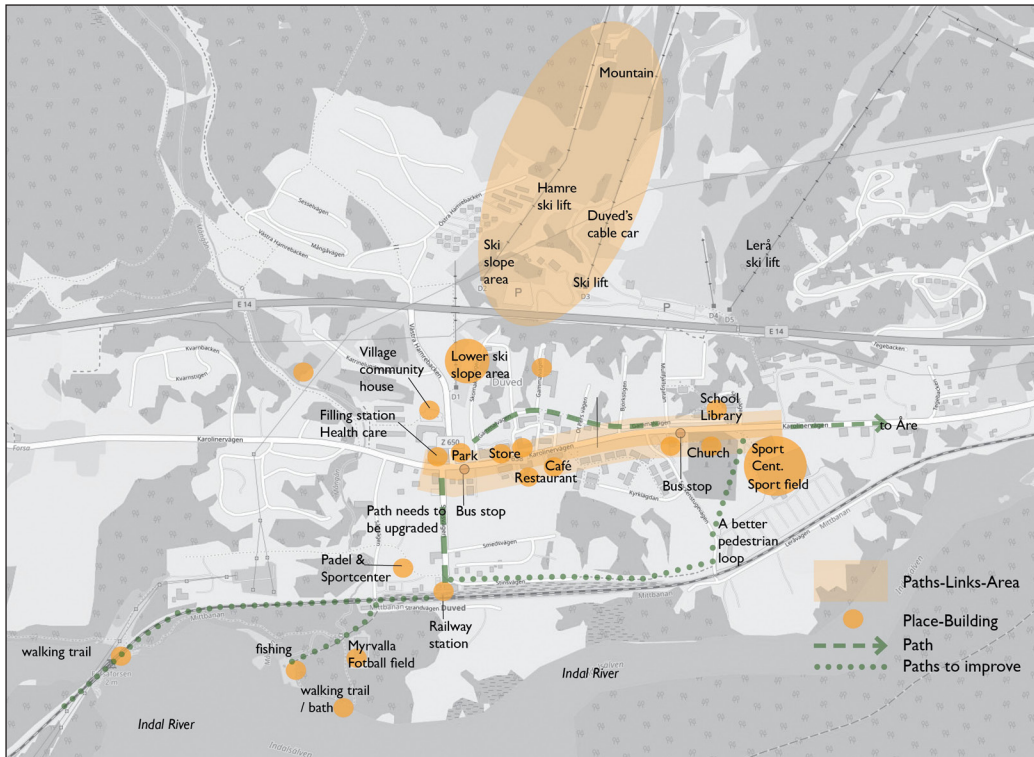


Figure 3: Significant places and areas that the officials identify (orange), and the paths identified as important for everyday mobility and for recreation (green lines).

3.3 THE PERSPECTIVE OF CITIZENS AND LOCALLY ENGAGED PEOPLE

Information from residents and locally engaged people was collected through a web-based questionnaire including a map tool (PPGIS), and an open public meeting with an exhibition.

The result from the web-based map questionnaire included places of four types with the following distribution: (1) places often used (32%), (2) places appreciated (25%), (3) places important for the community (15%) and (4) places avoided or where people do not feel comfortable (6%). According to questionnaire results, and the marked places on maps (including information about *why* people visit them), places providing service, both public and commercial, are the most frequently reported. Most of these are in Duved, located along the main road Karolinervägen. However, there are also clusters in Åre and several other villages, indicating the interdependence between the villages in the valley. Next come places in the natural surroundings and the mountain area. It is clear that recreation is a key factor for the wellbeing of the respondents. Several of the free-text answers mention how important it is to preserve nature to improve accessibility to recreation facilities (including crossing points, cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways). Nature also has a strong visual value, and several respondents stressed the need to preserve vistas of the mountain and the river (Figure 4). Infrastructure such as the E14 highway is pointed out as a barrier, as is private land ownership that limits free movement.

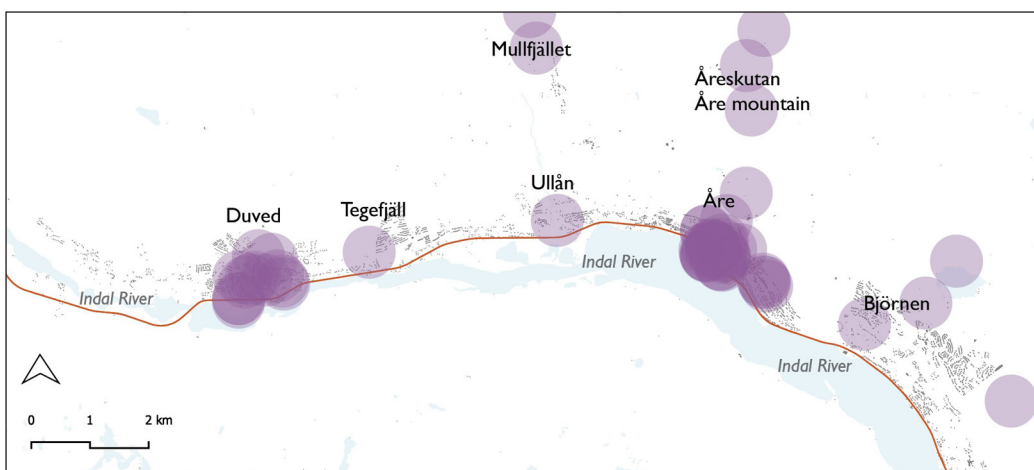


Figure 4: Significant places for the community according to the respondents of the web-based questionnaire.

An open public meeting with an exhibition was arranged in collaboration with Åre municipality. The aim was to initiate an on-site dialogue on significant places and to share results from the web-based questionnaire, the interviews with the officials, alongside images and maps of heritage buildings included in the Cultural Environment Program to reflect upon and comment. The exhibition was interactive and open to writing or drawing directly on the photos and maps on display.

The result from the interviews and the maps produced during the meeting was largely consistent with the result from the web-based questionnaire. Places relating to outdoor recreation and the nature surrounding the village—the mountains and the river—are identified not only as important from a recreation perspective but also as significant social meeting places with social value. These resources are a strong reason for people to live and thrive in Duved; people hike, ski, bike, etc., in nature. Conflicting interests are brought up especially in connection to the popular activities of hunting and snow scooter driving that are also popular activities; this is much more discussed in relation to conflicting land uses. For example, these activities frequently disturb the grazing herds of the Sami people as well as hikers and skiers with their loud noise. Hunting activities sometimes end up in conflict with local landowners. Some of the informants criticise the authorities for not taking this seriously enough, an ignorance and passivity that risk further escalation.

Surprisingly few places characterised by their cultural values were identified. However, many people showed great interest in the photos and descriptions of buildings and environments on display. Participants asked for more information.⁶ Certainly, cultural heritage is tangible in the valley, but the survey indicates a limited knowledge about heritage among participants in the meeting. This calls for increased awareness and communication from the authorities, perhaps in collaboration with local associations. Several visitors informed us about previous culture activities that used to be important for the identity of the local community, e.g. a country music festival and a theatre community. It is now long since such events were arranged, and today most cultural activities are initiated by commercial interests.

Comments on service and welfare amenities include social aspects of these as arenas for meeting and communication. Places important for children and young people are to a large extent associated with sports, except for the youth club (located in Åre village). Therefore, other places take over the function of youth hangouts, such as the train station or even the public transportation systems in itself (trains and buses). The question engaged many participants who had ideas on how to develop places that young people appreciate. The expansive housing development in the Åre Valley was brought up as having negative consequences. Concerns about the expansion include the fear of losing the village character due to the influx of new residents (some of whom are not permanent). No incentive was found that preserves the existing village character and its building scale in the municipal Comprehensive Plan. This is partly driven by increased demand. In combination with increased real estate prices of about 50–60%,⁷ this is of great concern to the permanent residents. Furthermore, people anticipate a lack of capacity in the ski system, increased disturbances for outdoor life and overcrowding at sensitive places.⁸

Besides the specific places identified as important for the community, there was a large number of comments on the need to improve the social infrastructure. Characteristically, the suggestions were humble, e.g. more benches, pathways or barbecue facilities. Several comments also related to access to existing social infrastructure: establishing and/or improving the pathways that lead to meeting places, e.g. along the river, or improving the road and railroad crossings to make it easier to reach the ski slopes and hiking trails. And improving the connections between the main destinations in the village: the railway station, the sports field and the school, primarily for people walking or cycling. Apart from the need for general indoor meeting places and areas for organised cultural activities, the mentioning of places for distinctive social functions were few. Instead, social perspectives tended to be embedded in reflections on other aspects.

Worth noting is the understanding of the village *beyond* the village as being part of the entire Åre Valley and municipality. Several functions that support social values are distributed over an area much bigger than Duved village itself. Hence, the good network of public transportation and improved bike lanes and pedestrian walkways asked for by many indirectly answer to social needs.

Significant places according to the participants of the public meeting include places for informal gatherings and arenas for particular groups and communities (e.g. the ski slope and the sport cluster), as well as places for outdoor recreation. One observation pertaining to the built environments' social values is that it is not necessarily the primary land use that defines whether a space or building will be important from a social perspective. In planning documents, one place or building can only be (legally) associated with *one* type of land use, i.e. housing, sport, education, etc. (According to building and planning legislation in Sweden, no land-use category corresponds with multiple functions except from 'centre'.) However, places with social value tend to be meeting places, regardless of whether they have a commercial, public or recreational function. In a small community, where there are few places that emerge into social infrastructure, places tend to be afforded multiple functions, not the least social. From a traditional planning perspective these are difficult to programme beforehand or to safeguard legally and are therefore extra vulnerable in times of transition.

3.4 CREATIVE MAPPING: SUPERIMPOSING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

When comparing information from the three perspectives, differences and similarities emerge. There is agreement between the officials' and the citizens' perspectives regarding places significant for informal gatherings and recreation. However, citizens express a need to increase accessibility to these places in what is identified as the *social infrastructure*, while the officials do not. The most obvious discrepancies appear as places highlighted in the planning documents are compared with the two other perspectives. The Comprehensive Plan offers an overview and describes environments or habitats as typologies, rather than specificities in the community, identified by name or marked on any maps. In some respects, the plan is contradictory, on the one hand calling for preserving outdoor interest and on the other allowing new development that risks conflicting with such interests. The information deriving from citizens and officials is much more detailed and, importantly for the social aspects, also provides information on *why* places and buildings are significant.

By merging results from the different mapping exercises, it turns out that places with inherent social value are characterised by strong *multifunctionality*. However, according to the logic of planning institutions, land use focuses on the primary function and use a *single functionality*. This poses a risk to places that host social functions in addition to their primary use. The prime example in Duved is the grocery store that surfaces in different ways across the surveys: noted to provide an important service to the community but also for being a social hub where repeated visits foster a sense of togetherness, and it functions as a kind of informal liaison office.

The collected cultural heritage map is another case in point with regard to social aspects. Overlaps between buildings and environments listed in heritage inventories and our surveys can be misleading as to the reason *why* a specific place is noted. Such discrepancies are telling as they point to differences in understanding the *nature* of a place's significance, and the social value ascribed to it, by the inhabitants themselves. For example, one such split is evident in the understanding of the railway station. In heritage documentation, the station building is noted as a well-preserved modern architectural type, and the tracks for their domination of the landscape. The citizens also mark the station building and tracks. However, the building is not marked for its architectural qualities, but for its social value, as young peoples' public meeting place and as a symbol of Duved's excellent communication with the rest of the valley and Sweden as a whole. The tracks are not marked for their landscape role but as a barrier, an obstacle for movement that reduces access to the social infrastructure. Nevertheless, there is no contradiction in this: there may be different social values related to a place, and it is argued that different reasons may be equally relevant.

Another split emerges in the evaluation of the vistas. The Development Program (again, based on heritage inventories) details several lines as noteworthy, but they provide visual access only to manmade environments such as buildings (the church) or 'urban' features (the main road), whereas our informants highlighted the site, the natural surroundings and wanted to safeguard views of

the mountain and the river. Similarly, the most distinguished built construction of Duved, the large 19th-century wooden church, is well documented and noted in all planning documents, but was mentioned as important for the community’s social functions by comparatively few participants in our surveys. Moreover, from a social perspective, the heritage programme’s delimitation of 30 years for significant buildings automatically ruled out several of the socially valuable but younger buildings that were identified in our surveys.

In short, the official heritage assessment does acknowledge the connection between built heritage, landscape, and their importance for collective memory and the identity of the community. However, they fail to reflect the community’s lived experience of their places (Johnston 1992).

Based on the results derived from the different perspectives, four different categories of places are proposed. These are partly inspired by Johnston (1992), but modified to address a rural context. That is, places recognised for social values due to their affordances to:

- provide an essential reference point in a community’s identity or sense of itself (historical grounding) including architectural artefacts and key amenities (physical and virtual spaces)
- provide a place for informal meetings and gatherings, places for the exchange of information and knowledge open to anyone
- provide an arena for certain communities, connected to a specific interest and/or association (e.g. sports, recreation, cultural activities, religion etc.) and
- provide opportunities for recreation and experiencing nature.

Table 1 organises specific places according to the four categories (horizontal) and the type of function or place (vertical). The *categories* refer to the social value of a place, and *types* refer to the built material or to the landscape which is our introduction to the question. The types are organised into four groups: activity or land use, architectural artefact or monument, social amenity, as well as open space/landscape.

Table 1: Matrix of categories and types of spaces

		CATEGORY			
		COMMUNITY’S IDENTITY	INFORMAL MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS	ARENA FOR CERTAIN/PARTICULAR COMMUNITIES	RECREATION AND EXPERIENCING NATURE
TYPE	ACTIVITY/LAND USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railway station • Ski slope and ski lift • Healthcare centre • Digital arenas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport cluster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ski slope and ski lift • Myggvalla (sport field)
	ARCHITECTURAL ARTEFACT MONUMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karoliner monument • Duved church • Railway station • Elementary school • Community house • The Love Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duved church • Byföreningshuset (community house) • Scout cottage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ski lift constructions
	SOCIAL AMENITY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Love Park: village ‘square’ • Restaurants and shops along the main road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scout cottage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ski slope and ski lift
	OPEN SPACE/NATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountains • River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karolinervägen (village’s main road) • Bus stop/public transportation • The Love Park: village ‘square’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running/skiing tracks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountains • River

The definition of relevant categories and relevant types is one important step in this approach, especially for later translating this to planning documents with the aim of preserving places and buildings in a way that does not compromise their social values. It is a way of recognising the multifunctional characteristics. Categories and types may need to be modified in relation to the environment studied. Adding more perspectives may change the chosen categories and types.

The results illustrate that investigating not only different perspectives but also actively translating them into one common tool increases the understanding of how social values manifest in a community. Such results also provide support for professionals to acknowledge and integrate knowledge on distinctive/specific spatial resources with social value into plans and policies and inform future planning processes and urban development initiatives (Samuel & Hatleskog 2020) (Figure 5).

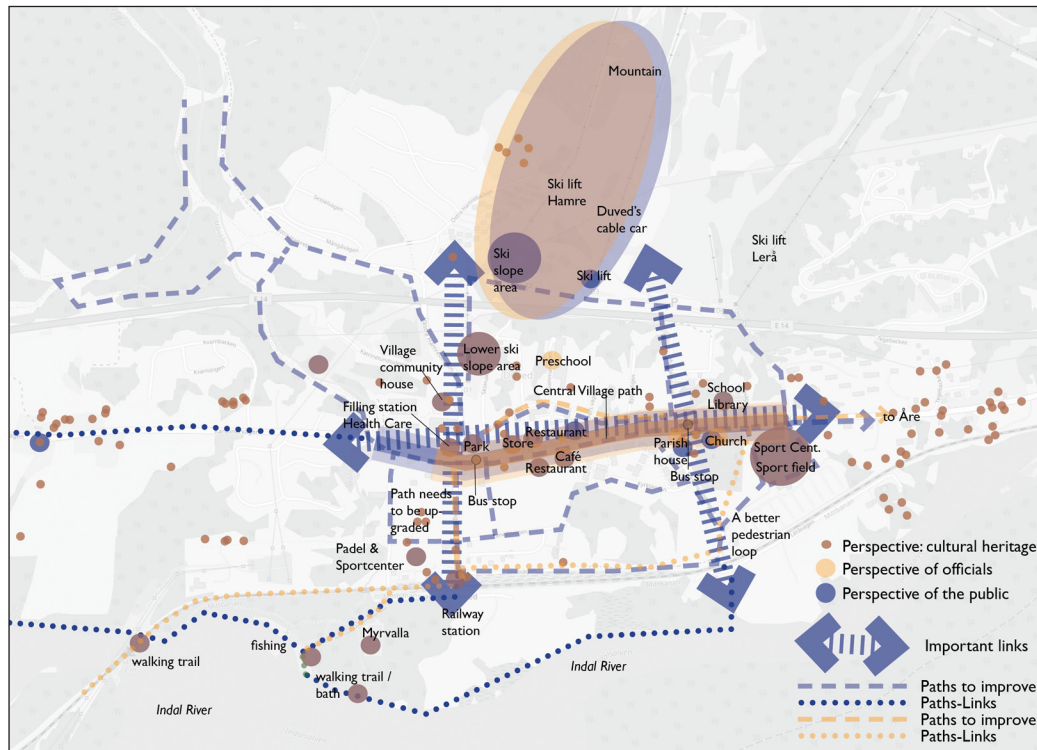


Figure 5: Compiled map of the perspectives studied here illustrated in different colours that reveal commonalities and when they diverge.

Note: For example, the main village road is described as significant in all three perspectives, while the links going in a north–south direction are perceived as important by the public, but not highlighted by the officials nor highlighted in planning documents.

4. DISCUSSION: MAKING THE INTANGIBLE VISIBLE

By definition, sustainable development is inclusive and represents a multitude of interests, ranging from cultural heritage, adoption to climate change, transformation towards equal living conditions as well as acknowledging people’s perceptions, and bonds to places, fostering a sense of belonging. There are many trade-offs and processes of prioritisation. Nevertheless, clear evidence is essential to guide such considerations and decision-making.

Stakeholders value place differently and for different reasons. By superimposing the various maps, it is possible to visually note these differences. Places that perform as social arenas in the local community are few and are inherently multifunctional. The ‘significant places’ typically expanded the so-called primary land use to offer multilayered uses.

This study has provided an approach to identify the intangible qualities that make places ‘significant’ for a local community. Increasing the understanding of the characteristics that make such places may contribute to them being acknowledged in future planning and secure their preservation and also their development.

The study particularly highlights the fragile linkage between social value and architecture/environment in a small community. In a village, spaces for social interaction may be few and not visible in the built fabric. In times of transformation, their role in fostering social

cohesion and togetherness may be overlooked. Ill-considered transformations or demolitions of seemingly negligible buildings or spaces can therefore pose a threat to values that go well beyond the spaces or the buildings themselves.

Traditional planning procedures are typically based on primary land-use principles and therefore can be especially blunt tools in rural communities. The multifunctional spaces and localities often contribute strongly to local identity and help sustain the community. In Duved, artefacts related to skiing and outdoor activities are especially important for the identity and strengthen the village as a recreational and outdoor resort.

The present study proves that social value may be inherent in places lacking cultural heritage values, and in a community such as Duved, which is strongly defined by its natural environment and depends on it for its continued existence. The possibility to use, and interact with, the natural environment over the shifting seasons has proved to have a strong social meaning for the inhabitants of Duved.

At the same time, public service is also important from a symbolic perspective, making the larger society present locally, what may be referred to as ‘societal presence’ or ‘presence of culture’ (Legeby *et al.* 2015; Koch *et al.* 2017). To have a healthcare clinic, a train station or a school, communicates a certain level of municipal–regional investment in the wellbeing of its citizens. As institutions are very few in a rural context, their impairment means a loss of their programmed function and also of multiple others, including the social and symbolic.

Social value can also be understood through negation, what it is *not*. In the case of Duved, the undesirable features of the neighbouring major ski resort of Åre help to define the desirable values of Duved. Both officials and citizens mentioned this as they perceive Åre village as overexploited and dominated by tourists and second-home owners.

The inadequacies of traditional planning procedures to acknowledge socially relevant places and functions was critically demonstrated at the time of the study. In spring 2021, the municipality launched a programme for new development in central Duved. Despite including a participatory process as a first step, several—if not most—of those places that citizens and officials alike signalled as important in our surveys were eliminated in the new plan to give way for new construction. Moreover, the plan does not propose new places to compensate for the loss of places identified as significant. This illustrates the inability of traditional planning procedures to identify and safeguard the social value that places afford.

If the ambitious goals regarding democratic engagement in planning processes are to be fulfilled, this calls for modified planning methods in the future development of Duved village, Åre municipality and elsewhere. A systematic analysis of multiple perspectives through mapping can help make such discrepancies and overlaps visible in different stakeholders’ understanding of social values relating to space and built environments. The map is also an interface that all stakeholders understand, lay people as well as professionals, and can help translate qualities and values from one perspective to another. Notably, this method works in both ways: it identifies places that are deemed valuable by the local community but not visible in planning documents, and vice versa—it introduces official value assessments (heritage documentation made by experts) that the residents are not aware of.

5. CONCLUSIONS

There is a need for planning methods to deliver a nuanced understanding of how different stakeholders’ value places, associated with meaning and social value.

The approach developed and tested in this study has illustrated how the mapping procedure can reveal intangible social values and not least the intangible multifunctionality that places and buildings afford. This knowledge can contribute to empowering different groups and stakeholders whose voices risk to be overlooked (Petcou & Petrescu 2015). A mapping procedure of different stakeholders’ perspectives is a successful approach that opens to a more democratic, inclusive and

sustainable planning practice, while fostering a mutual understanding for different perspectives (compare with ‘acceptance’ in Duval *et al.* 2019).

Current legal planning practices are oriented to single-use definitions, which is a drawback when it comes to development and transformation in small communities. A transformation towards increased awareness of multifunctionality needs to be integrated into planning documents, e.g. acknowledging that a park, a football field or a ski slope may have different affordances and a wide set of social values besides its primary function.

In a village such as Duved, places with social value are few and may be hard to identify and protect with traditional planning approaches and institutions. In the face of the current pressure for transformation and densification, their loss can cause severe disruption to the social wellbeing of its inhabitants. This study contributes with insights for planning practice that have the potential to foster democratic decision-making and to empower the local population and improve the quality of its living environment.

NOTES

- 1 The mapping aimed at identifying different categories of ‘significant places’ and this paper focuses on results relating to social values.
- 2 The survey is presented in detail by Legeby *et al.* (2021).
- 3 An English translation of the PPGIS survey is provided in the supplemental data online.
- 4 Respondents: 67% women and 33% men. The majority (80%) were in employment. The most common household consisted of two to four members.
- 5 An English translation of the interview questions is provided in the supplemental data online.
- 6 Such observations led to discussions on setting up an open archive as a further step in a developed study, where information of buildings and environments could be collected, an archive to which both professionals and the public could contribute.
- 7 During the last five years the increase has been 54% (detached houses) and 60% (private housing cooperatives) (Svensk Mäklarstatistik 2023).
- 8 The development area Rödkullen is of concern for many people.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that supports the findings are collected by the authors through web-based questionnaires and interviews as part of the research project. The data from the questionnaire and interviews are not publicly available due to the privacy of the research participants. Separate reports describing the data and the results are available from the authors upon reasonable request.

Participant consent was obtained for the questionnaire and the interviews. According to the researchers' organisation, the Royal Institute of Technology KTH, no institutional ethical approval was needed for this project as the nature of the questions/survey does not address sensitive questions.

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SUPPLEMENTAL DATA

Two files containing supplemental data for this article (English translations of the PPGIS survey and the interview questions) can be accessed at: <https://doi.org/10.5334/bc.341.s1>.

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