

SITES OF MERIT IN ICELAND - VARDA

Mission for Ministry of Industries and Innovation, Department of Tourism

Mission Final Report – Graphic Documents Volume 2D / GULLFOSS

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In cooperation with



CONTENT OF THE FINAL REPORT

VOLUME 1 Synthesis of recommendations for Sites of Merit approach

Context, objectives of the mission and programme

Proposal for an innovative approach

- Natural & cultural sites and Sustainable development
- Sites of Merit Commitments

Testing the Grands Sites de France approach and methodology in Iceland

- A method based on the recognition and experience of the values of the site
- The key points of the method
- The interest of the exercise
- Translating these elements into action: the Landscape Intention Scheme

Recommendations for translating the Sites of Merit commitments to each site

- The vision, the principles for action in the sites
- The working method at each Site of Merit
- Site development

Recommendations for national policy steering

- Steering and governance at national level
- Position of the 4 test sites in relation to the Sites of Merit commitments
- The labelling process
- What types of sites should be involved in the Site of Merit Policy ?
- Involvement of private partners and private owners of the sites
- Local governance of projects
- Involve architects, landscapers and contractors
- Create a site managers network

Conclusion

Annexes: List of documents transmitted to MII, Programm, List of Participants

VOLUME 2 Graphic Documents (drawings, photos, Landscape Intention Schemes)

2A Introduction

2B Jokulsarlon

2C Geysir

2D Gullfoss

2E Thingvellir

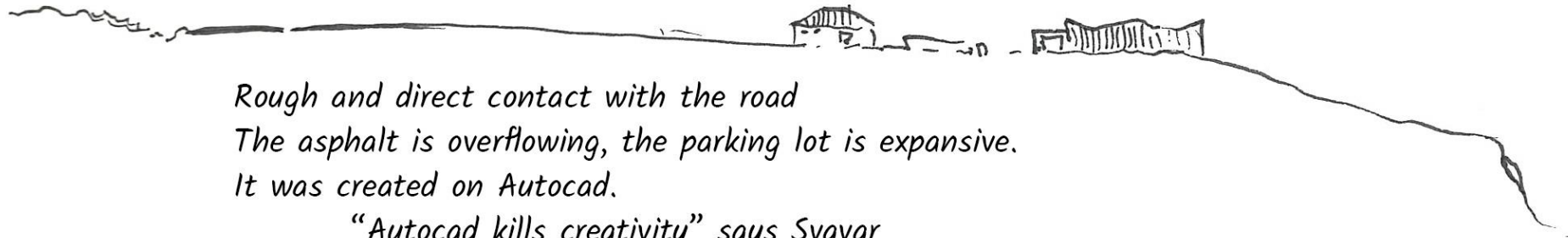
Note 1: In Volume 1, numbers in brackets refer to Volume 2 slides.

Note 2: In this document, "Sites of Merit" and "Varda" are used interchangeably.

Note 3: All drawings, maps and LIS are by Alain Freytet.

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Gullfoss

Current section



*Rough and direct contact with the road
The asphalt is overflowing, the parking lot is expansive.
It was created on Autocad.*

*“Autocad kills creativity” says Svavar
the owner of the restaurant / shop, it is to be reworked and expanded.*

Section of the project



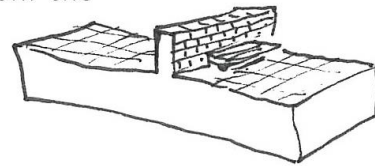
road

*parking in
pockets separated
by tundra*

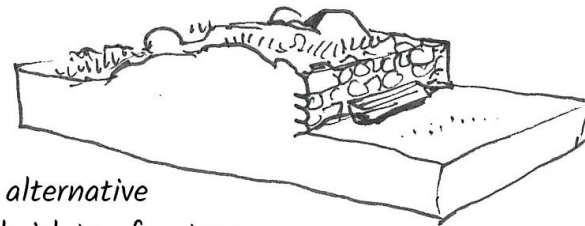
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Today walls are
built to protect
visitors from the
wind and
the cold



A steep wall in
artificial stone!



An alternative
with islets of nature
leaning against dry stone walls

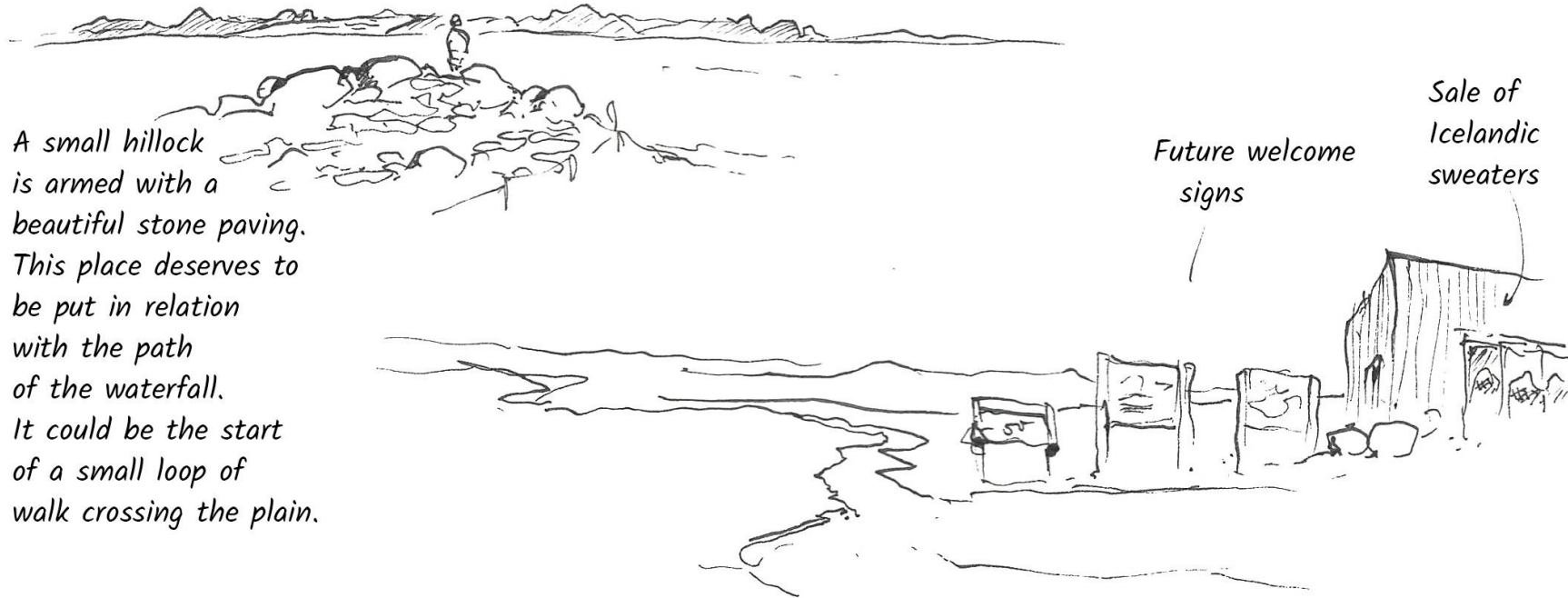


Like
black
sand dunes



"Restaurant, gift shop, waterfall, toilets" on the same level... is this a major Icelandic site or a motorway service area?!!

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A small hillock is armed with a beautiful stone paving. This place deserves to be put in relation with the path of the waterfall. It could be the start of a small loop of walk crossing the plain.

Future welcome signs

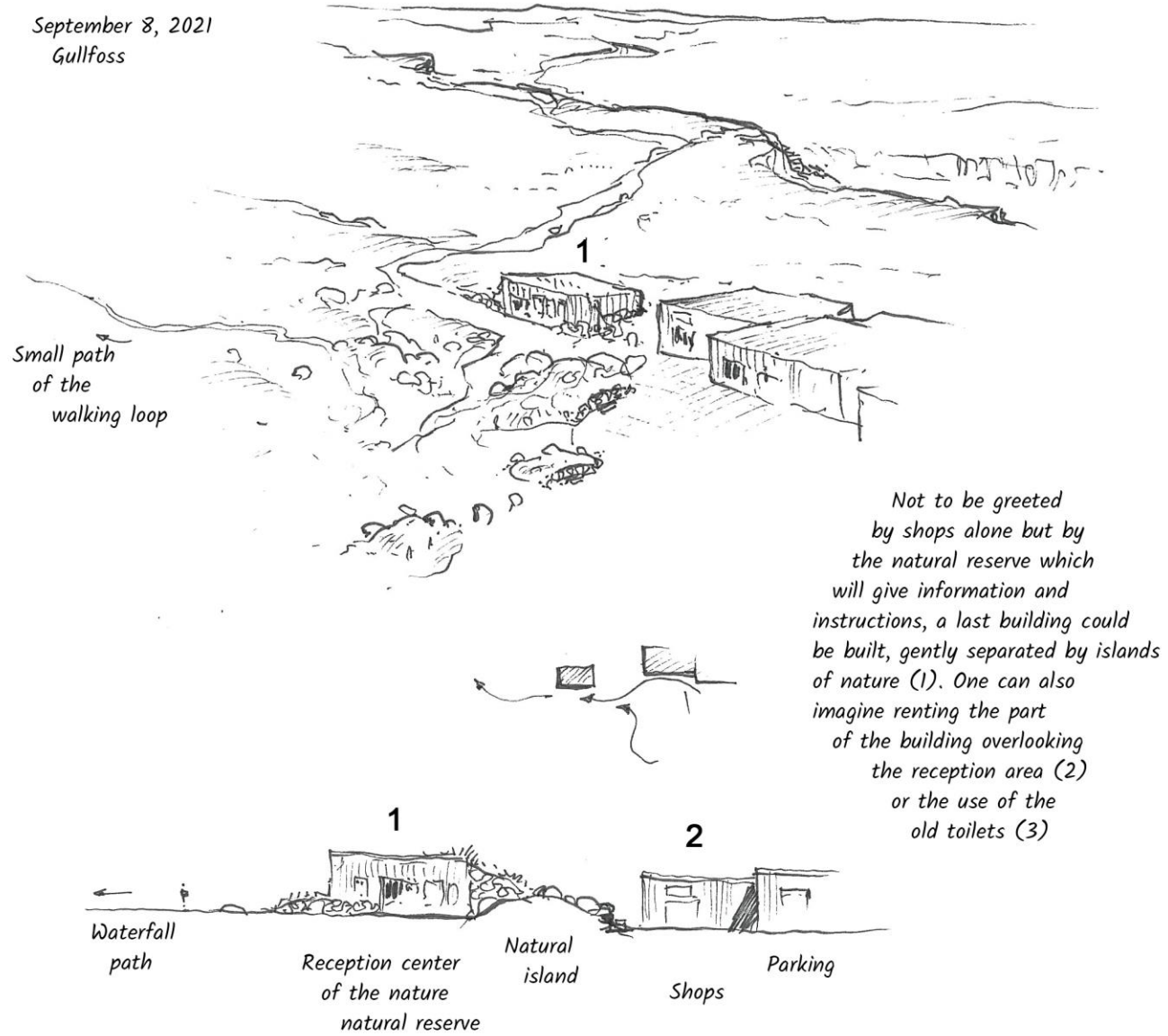
Sale of Icelandic sweaters

The contact is hard and the setting up of a reception center on the site would be important.



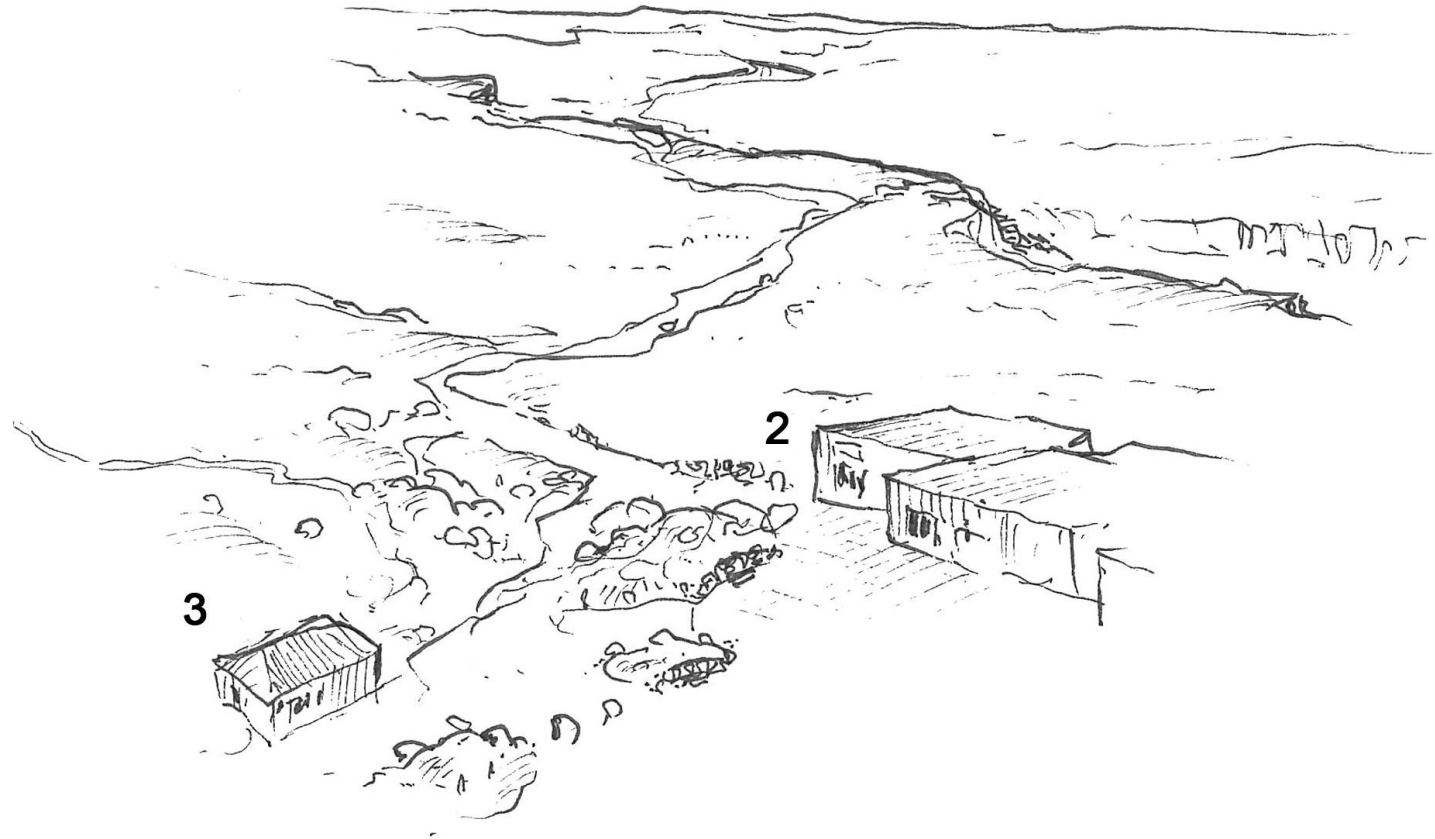
Discussion with the owner of the restaurant: the power of expression by the sketch which allows easy understanding of each other

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Three options for Gullfoss Interpretation Center

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Gullfoss



Three options for Gullfoss Interpretation Center



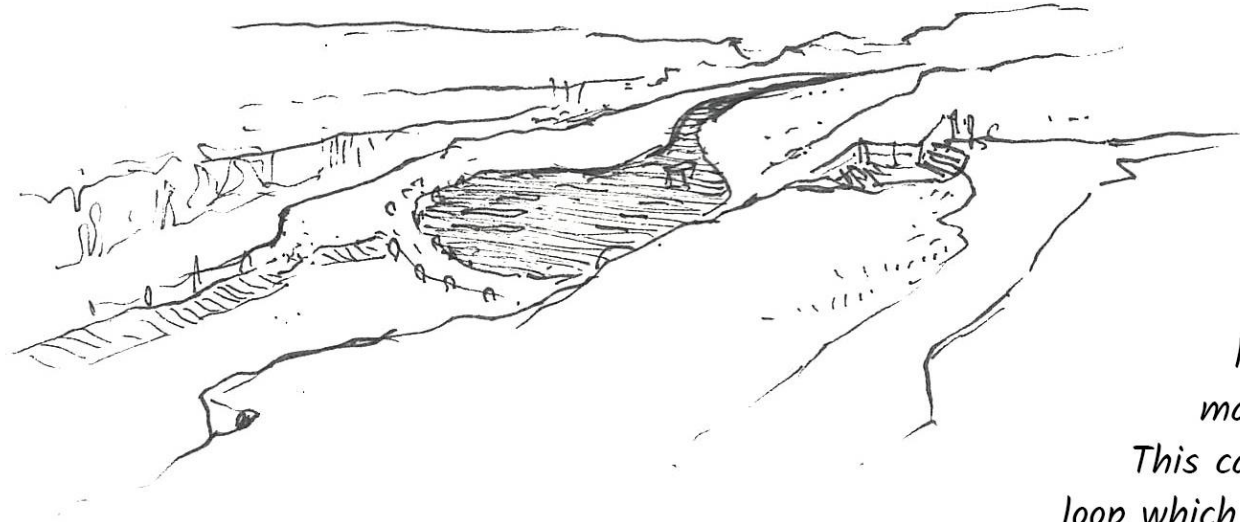
The new developments, well designed, with quality and sobriety. High number of visitors, wide concrete path.





Suggestion for the base of the building with a simple and elegant design, which is simple but reduces its impact considerably

September 8, 2021
Gullfoss



Almost on the point of view we make a strange and disconcerting discovery of the lower parking lot, like an asphalt slab with its marks for the parking spaces.

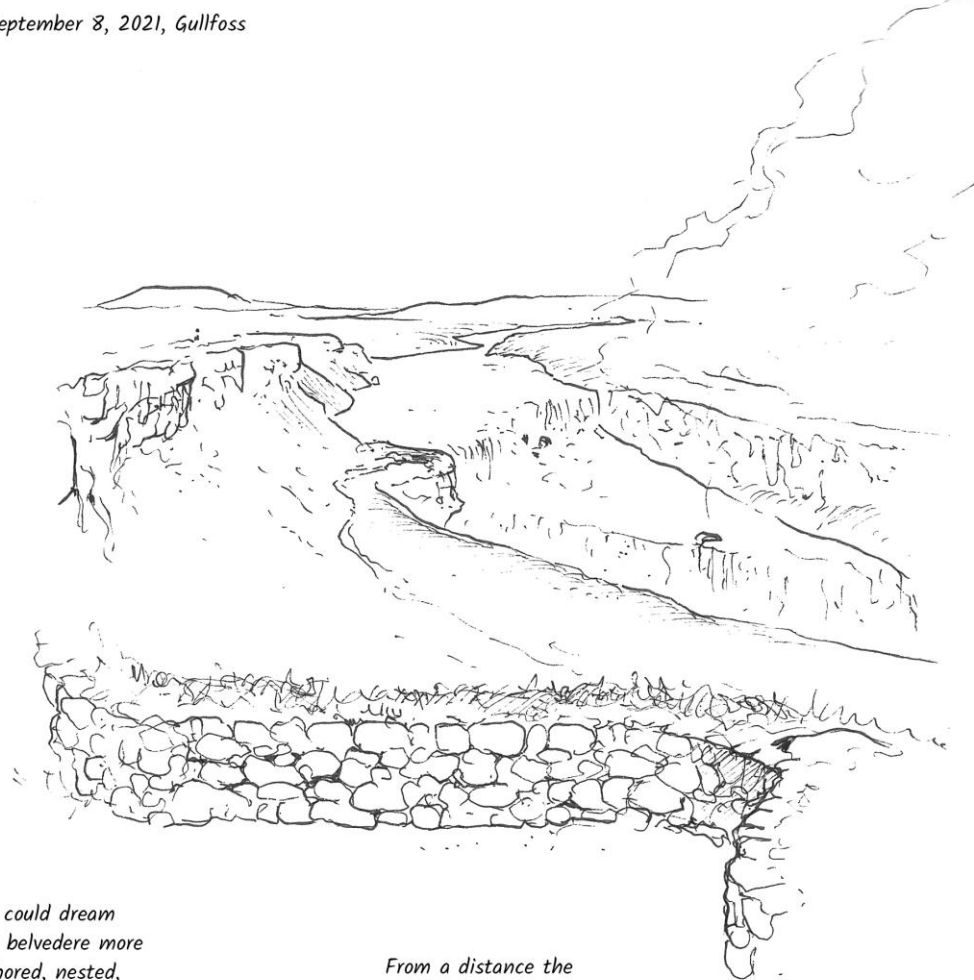
This car park condemns a small pedestrian loop which promises to be magnificent.

Google map leads visitors to this parking lot, instead of sending them to the top one. This road led to the old restaurant. It would have to be dismantled and renatured by doing like the old path

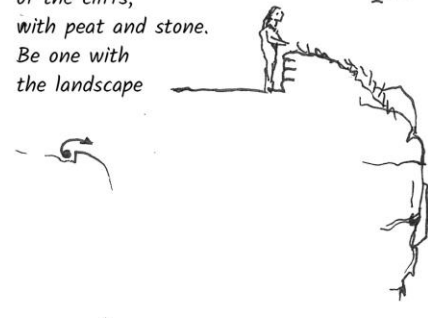




Anne Vourc'h, Alain Freytet, Yoann Bit-Monnot, Assistance Mission for the Sites of Merit in Iceland Project, 2021



One could dream
of a belvedere more
anchored, nested,
like an extension
of the cliffs,
with peat and stone.
Be one with
the landscape



From a distance the
half-hidden visitors
appear smaller and
therefore the site larger.



Belvedere
more visible
but more
accessible
in winter.



On the belvedere,
materials are a
little cold, noisy
but certainly
necessary for the snow.

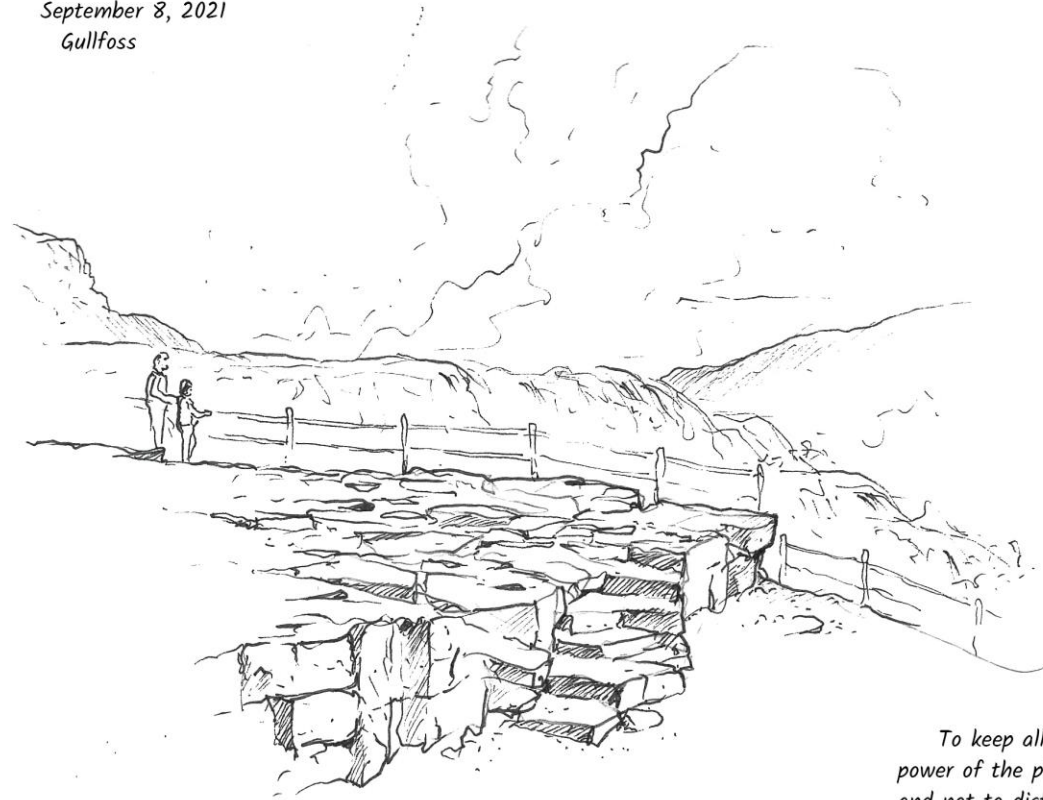


The beautiful, winding natural path leading to the waterfall



The presence of the rock, which is very important for the visitor experience and reminds us that we are in a powerful site and that we must be careful. Do not cover it with a platform, but improve access by carving some steps into the rock.

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*The experience of the waterfall
is lived fully on the platform of wild stones.*

*The uncomfortable slab floor, the spray, the muffled sound
of the waterfall make other senses work than sight.*

*This little adventure will be remembered much more by visitors
than the hundredth photo taken at the foot of the bus.*

*“The effort and the fatigue act on the emotions
like the fixer on the photographic print” Julien Gracq*

*To keep all the
power of the place
and not to distort
by not very useful
installations, it
would be enough
to carve steps
in the mass
of the stone
taking advantage
of the cracks.*



*Sigríður would
not like installations
that are too heavy*

Gullfoss

1. Concentrate the parking in one place, before the reception point by freeing the edges of the waterfall from the car.

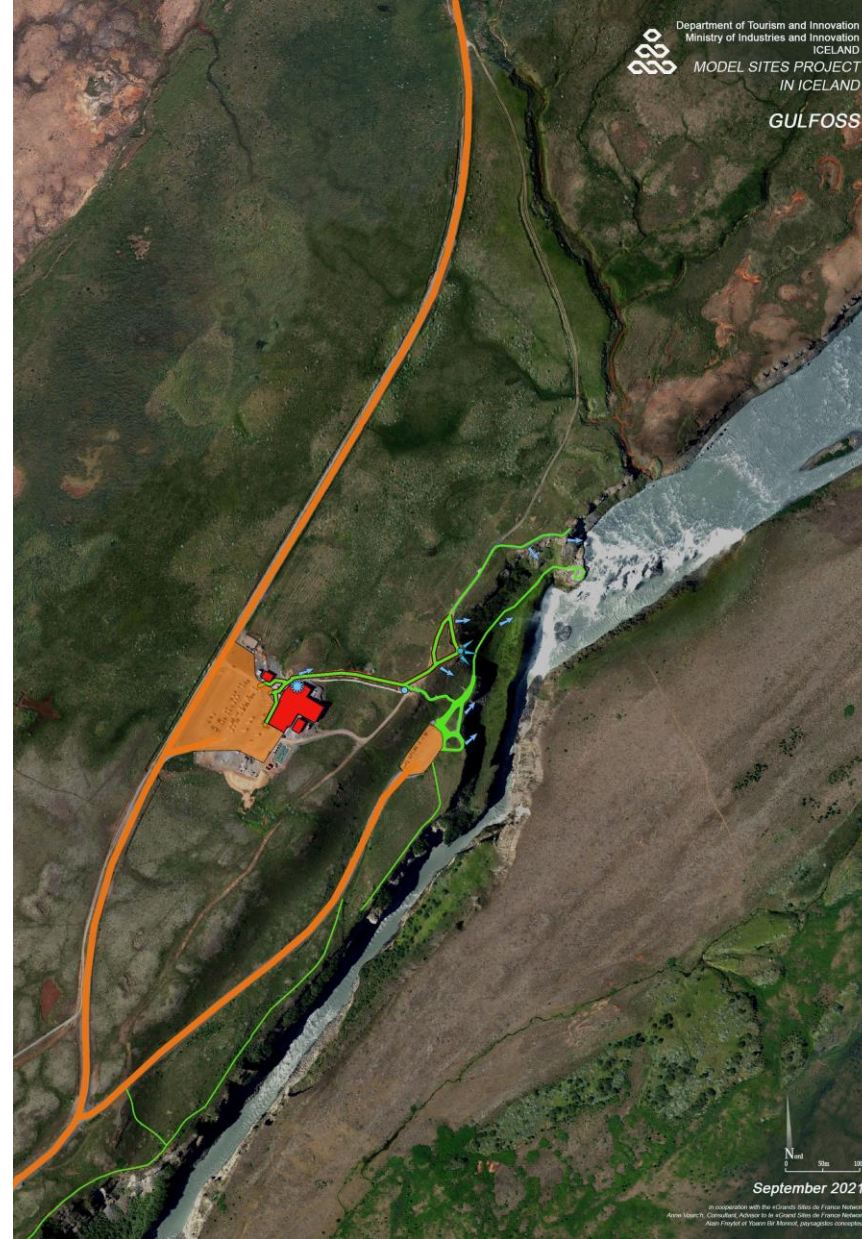
Beyond the access to the belvedere, propose different loops of walks which enlarge the scope of the site

2. Design the entrance to the natural site with care, with a presence and a message of the E.A. which is not commercial

3. Create a gradient of accessibility with the belvedere loop (concrete floor), very accessible for general public, with comfortable paths leading to large viewpoints ; then narrower paths ...

4. Keep in direct contact with the elements: stone, water, wind and not to break it by overly sophisticated arrangements. Use local natural materials: Stone, plants from the tundra

The basis of the project for Gullfoss, in 4 key points.



As today, 2021



As it could be with the destruction of the lower car park, the requalification of the upper car park, and the creation of trail loops.



As today, 2021, the very well preserved landscape viewed from the entrance of the site of Gullfoss.



Simulation: Paying attention to the development of the left bank: how to control possible construction projects and ensure that they do not compromise the high quality of the landscape that is so important for the beauty of Gullfoss and the visitor experience?