

South & East Asia

CLIENT BRIEF

The task was to design a tranquil garden for a temporary space in Christchurch city. The space is to be familiar to a particular region: South & East Asia. The site is to provide a peaceful and relaxing environment in which everyone can use, enjoy and experience tranquillity.

By analysing the cultural, spiritual and philosophical beliefs of South & East Asia, I have to create a design based on the traditions of this culture, thus creating a garden that is familiar to them.

The garden is to be temporary and relocatable; easily de-constructed and re-assembled, with an emphasis on the use of sustainable materials.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are several similarities and differences between the countries in the South & East Asian region. An important commonality found in this region is the topography and terrain. Many of these countries have rugged, mountainous terrain.

Often, individual mountains are culturally significant; particularly in spiritual beliefs. Mountains are sacred and holy, and are associated with religions such as Taoism, Buddhism, Shinto, and San - Shin, a Korean religion literally meaning mountain spirit or Mountain god. A common belief in this region is that mountains have spirits, and if you live in or climb these mountains, you will obtain the spirit and experience a deepening of their humanity.

The mountains are providers; they generate weather patterns, give us water and therefore the basic needs for life. These powerful structures are believed to contain spirits, and are places of ancestral origin. For example, Baekdu-san is the mighty sacred peak found along the China and North Korean boundary, which is referred to as the mythological birth place of the Korean people. For years people have lived in the mountains, Buddhists (Buddhism is a major religion in this region) set up monasteries in the mountains and people seeking spiritual enlightenment would congregate there. Now, temples and shrines found amidst the mighty mountains are visited often.

Mountains are a symbol of national aspirations. In fact, here in New Zealand we have a strong connection with the land and our natural environment, a culture that is adventurous in the outdoors. There are also strong spiritual connections between New Zealanders - Maori people - and the Land.

Mountain culture is a significant commonality in the South and East Asian region.



INSPIRATION

Mountain Culture

I have used this as the central idea to my design; using different layers and levels to create feelings like that of being in the mountain ranges of South and East Asia - creating a tranquil space, with large open space and small enclosed spaces. In amidst the mountains there are free, wide open spaces with views out across the landscape, and in other places there are small pockets of enclosure, isolation and refuge. I have incorporated these influences and feelings into my design.

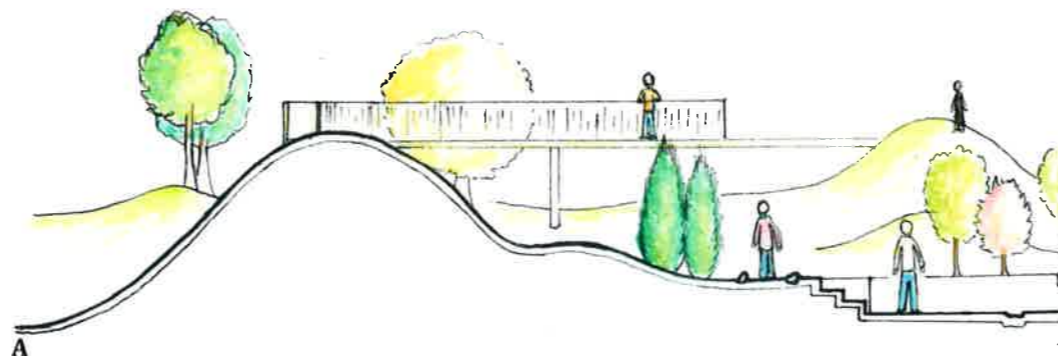


At the top of volcanic mountains are crater lakes. These lakes are often spiritually significant to cultures, and temples are located close by. Baekdu-san's Crater Lake, Heaven Lake, is the mythological birth place of Korean people, and it's the centre of their water source and energy; a life giving force for the peninsula and Korean people. The central water feature in my design is inspired by this idea, as crater lakes are attractions and an important part of mountain culture. The circular ring, with ornamental crushed glass, represents the frozen crater lakes. As well as this, the ring, which surrounded an island at its centre, reflects the topography of many of the South and East Asian countries - islands, countries and masses of land, surrounded by large bodies of water. Water is a unified feature in creating tranquillity across cultures, as it creates feelings of peace and relaxation.



SECTION ELEVATION AA SCALE 1:100

The varying levels and layers in the site - inspired by mountain culture.



The number 3 is incorporated into my design, as it is significant in several South & East Asian cultures:



This symbol is the Korean Sam-Taeguk, which is used in Korean Shamanism, Neo-Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism. It represents the origin of all things in the universe - it is based on the Ying yang principles.

The colours represent: Heaven (BLUE), Earth (RED) and Humanity (YELLOW). 3 is a number which is significant in Korean culture; there are 3 main 'spirited' mountains; Jirisan, Hallasan and Baekdusan.



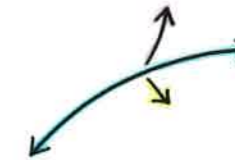
There are 3 jewels in Buddhism (which is a main religion in this region). These are 3 things that Buddhists take refuge in: Bhudda, Darma and Sangha.

1. Buddha Sanskrit, Pali: The Enlightened One
2. Dharma Sanskrit: The Teaching
3. Sangha Sanskrit, Pali: The Community

In China, the number 3 sounds like the character for birth, and is considered a lucky number.



The site has been divided into 3 main sections and there are 3 entrances into the site.



The site consists of 3 main pathways.



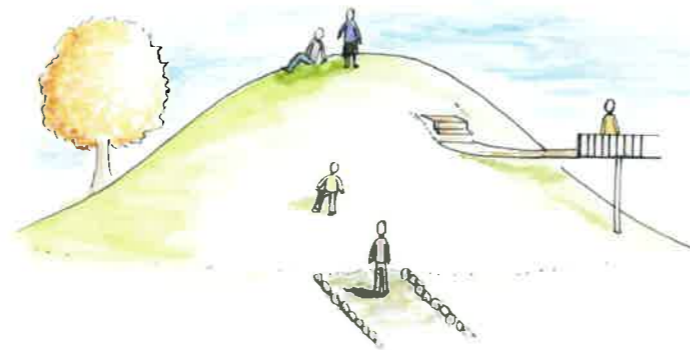
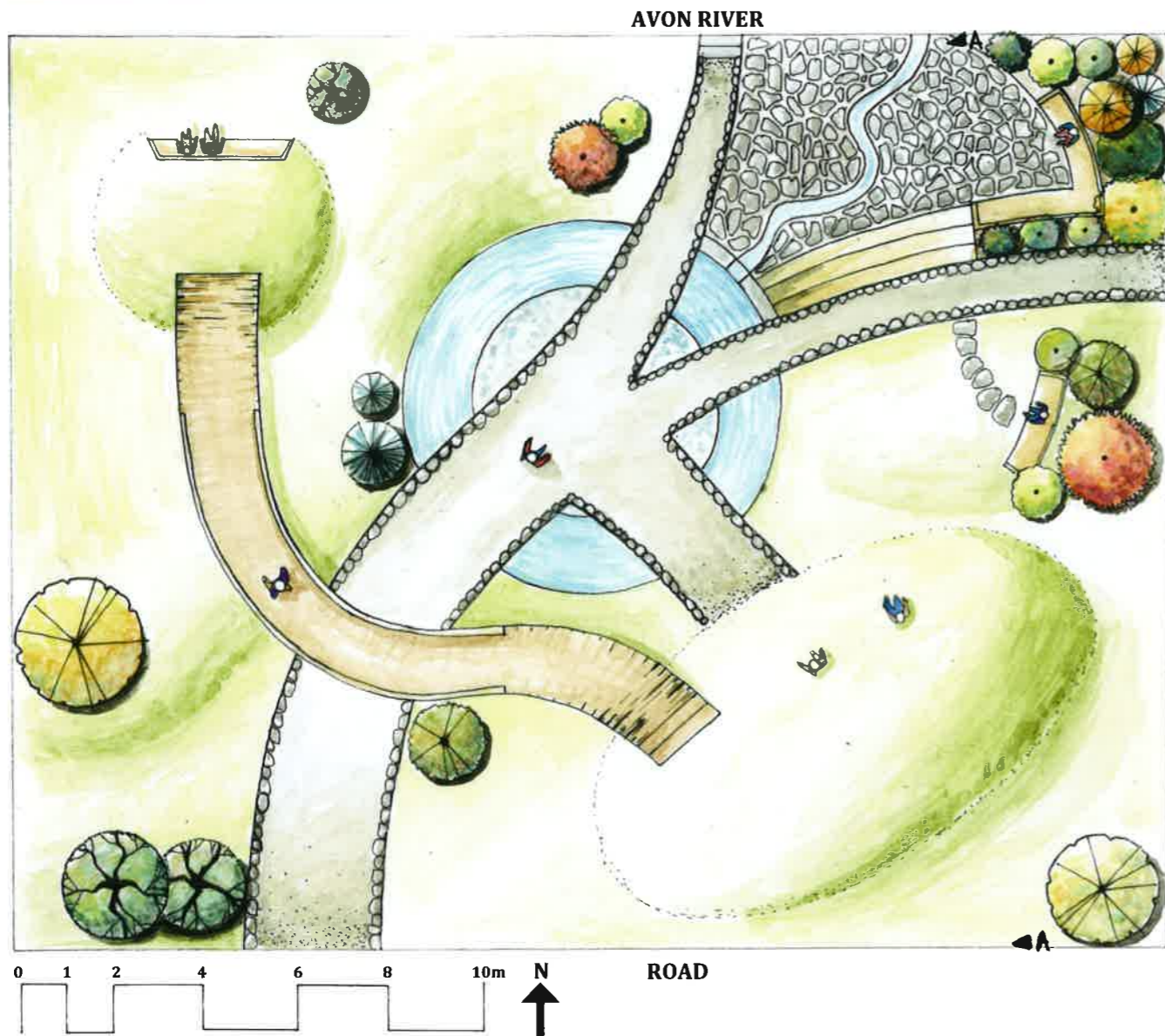
The mounds/hills, layers and different levels in the site reflect the topography and mountain culture of South & East Asia.

MATERIALS PALETTE

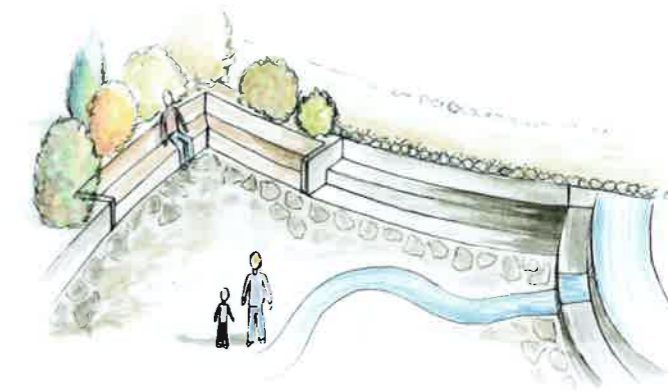
The materials in the site will consist mostly of reclaimed and recycled materials, in order to create a sustainable site.

Materials consist of: gravel, reclaimed timber, grass, recycled crushed glass, stones, reclaimed concrete, and resin.





SKETCHES



DESIGN INTENTION

- To create a design that:
- feels familiar to the South and East Asian community; inspiration being the mountain culture in South & East Asia.
 - is a tranquil space for everyone to relax in and enjoy.
 - is relocatable and sustainable.

PLANT LIST

- Trees:**
Acer Palmatum, Japanese Maple
Chamae Lawsoniana, Lawson Cypress
Koelreuteria Paniculata, Golden-Rain tree
Magnolia Campbellii, Pink Tulip tree
Magnolia Denudata, Yulan Magnolia
Prunus Mume, Japanese Apricot
Sophora Tetraptera, N. Island Kowhai
- Shrubs:**
Aucuba Japonica, Japanese Laurel
Ekianthus Perulatus, White Ekianthus
Hibiscus Rosa-sinensis, Rose of China
Hydrangea Macrophylla

DESIGN DESCRIPTION

There are 3 main entrances into the site; the wide paths cater to larger groups of people, and the narrow paths, to few people. This garden consist of soft rolling mounds and a few steep hills; there are various level changes in the site which creates a dynamic and interesting landscape. Beautiful trees and shrubs, the majority being from South and East Asia, so as to create familiarity, are featured in this garden, and a curved gravel path bordered with large stones reflects the mountainous terrain of the South and East Asian region. The 3 paths intersect at the centre of the garden; a central island of sparkling crushed glass, inspired by the icy crater lakes, encircled by a swirling water feature. The water circulates in the ring and flows down a meandering path into the avon. This site also accomodates to those wanting to experience tranquility at night; good lighting along the paths and bridge makes this accessible. The lights also emphasise the water feature. You can climb up a mound to view the entire site, or walk across the bridge to experience the wide open spaces with a full view of the Avon river. There are plenty of seats for resting and shelter, emphasising the tranquility and contemplative nature of the site. The lowest part of the site is made of reclaimed concrete as paving, with the stream winding through and depositing it's water into the river. This area provides a hidden seating area for small groups or intimate gatherings. This site caters to small and large groups of people; to those wanting enclosure and isolation, or wide open spaces. As a whole, the mountain inspired features work together to create a tranquil and restful site.

