

brief

The recent earthquakes have had an enduring impact on the emotional wellbeing of people living in Christchurch. This is especially true for those who are far from their family, friends and familiar surroundings.

Healthy Christchurch would like to provide such people with **tranquil** spaces in which they can feel **familiar** and find respite.

In order to create a sense of familiarity, the design will draw from a particular group's cultural, philosophical, and spiritual traditions.

The following proposal is aimed at Latin America, with a focus on Chile. However, the site must also be **welcoming** to anyone who wishes to use it.

The site is **temporary** with a view to being permanently installed elsewhere, so it must be relocateable.

Finally, the materials used should be sustainable - preferably recycled.

free to move

airy and open

comfortable

safe

gentle water

daydreaming

tranquillity

peaceful

calm

curves

let the mind wander

repetition

stare into space

natural

floating thoughts

cradled

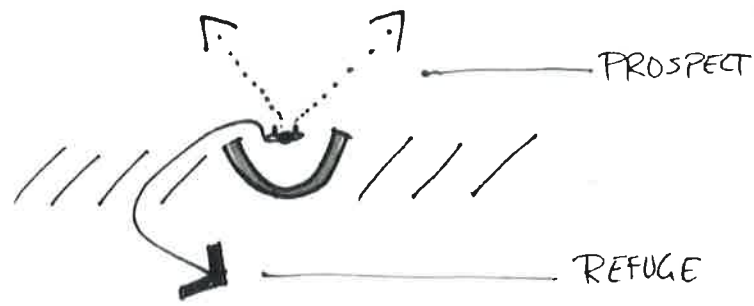
theory

There is a large amount of salvaged wood in Christchurch currently.

Wood is versatile, sustainable, natural, and gives a warm, homely feeling.

Wooden structures held up well during the earthquakes and as a result, wood has safe connotations

To the right are examples wood moulded into soft, natural, flowing forms. Light can still pass through, giving a soft ambience and comfortable sense of enclosure.



cultural inspiration

religion

"If you seek peace and tranquillity, you will certainly not find them so long as you have a cause for disturbance and turmoil within yourself."

St Ignatius of Loyola



Catholicism is the dominant religion throughout Latin America. Even if a person does not personally regard themselves as Catholic, elements of the religion will be woven into the cultural fabric of everyday life, often on a subconscious level, and will therefore feel familiar.

The site will include a place which invites a personal communion with God, allowing people to resolve any "inner turmoil". However, the reference will be discrete, so that the space is welcoming to people of all beliefs.

work ethic

"El que la sigue, la consigue"
(He who perseveres, succeeds)

Latin American saying



With ancestors who fought off the Spanish and Inca for centuries, and a cool to polar climate, hard work and perseverance is embedded in Chilean sense of identity. This attitude is common to many other Latin American countries as well. In response to this, the area of sanctuary will be difficult to get to. The visitor will have to persevere to reap the rewards.

To achieve this, the site will mimic the motion of a water ripple, continually pushing outward with the only still point being at very centre.

It is also a reference to the seismic waves in the ground that resulted in the need for this space. In the midst of all the upheaval there will be calm.

landscape

The landscape of Latin America is breathtaking with wide expansive spaces and many scarcely populated regions, such as the Andes pictured below. A view of a natural landscape will feel familiar for many people from Latin America, while also be enjoyable for other visitors.



The site will provide a space where only vegetation and the Avon can be seen. The view of the city will be shielded.



clear skies

Latin America, especially Chile has some of the clearest skies in the world. Being able to gaze up at the blue skies that Christchurch often enjoys creates a simple yet powerful connection to the familiar.

A tranquil state can be induced through "soft attention" - watching something that holds interest yet allows the mind to wander. Watching a fire, water flow or clouds pass are all examples of this.



James Turrell is known for his work (left) with skylights that 'bring the sky down' to the viewer, forming a link to the infinite. It can be a religious experience for some.

A link to the infinite can also be created framing a view in a way that mimics perspective and draws the eye to the desired location:



construction

It has been found that people will feel more comfortable in spaces where they feel physically protected from behind with a clear view out and an escape route to a place of refuge.

It is proposed that this perception of space is based on survival instinct.

People are unlikely to feel safe and relaxed if these conditions are not met, therefore it is essential for a place of tranquillity to incorporate this concept.



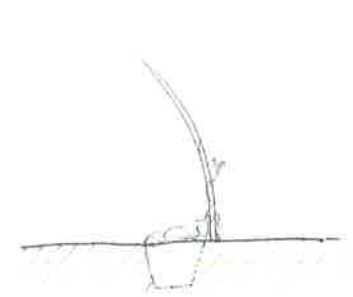
David Trubridge



Frank Gehry



A possible method of construction. Thin planks of wood are steamed then woven to form sections. Each section can be detached and relocated.

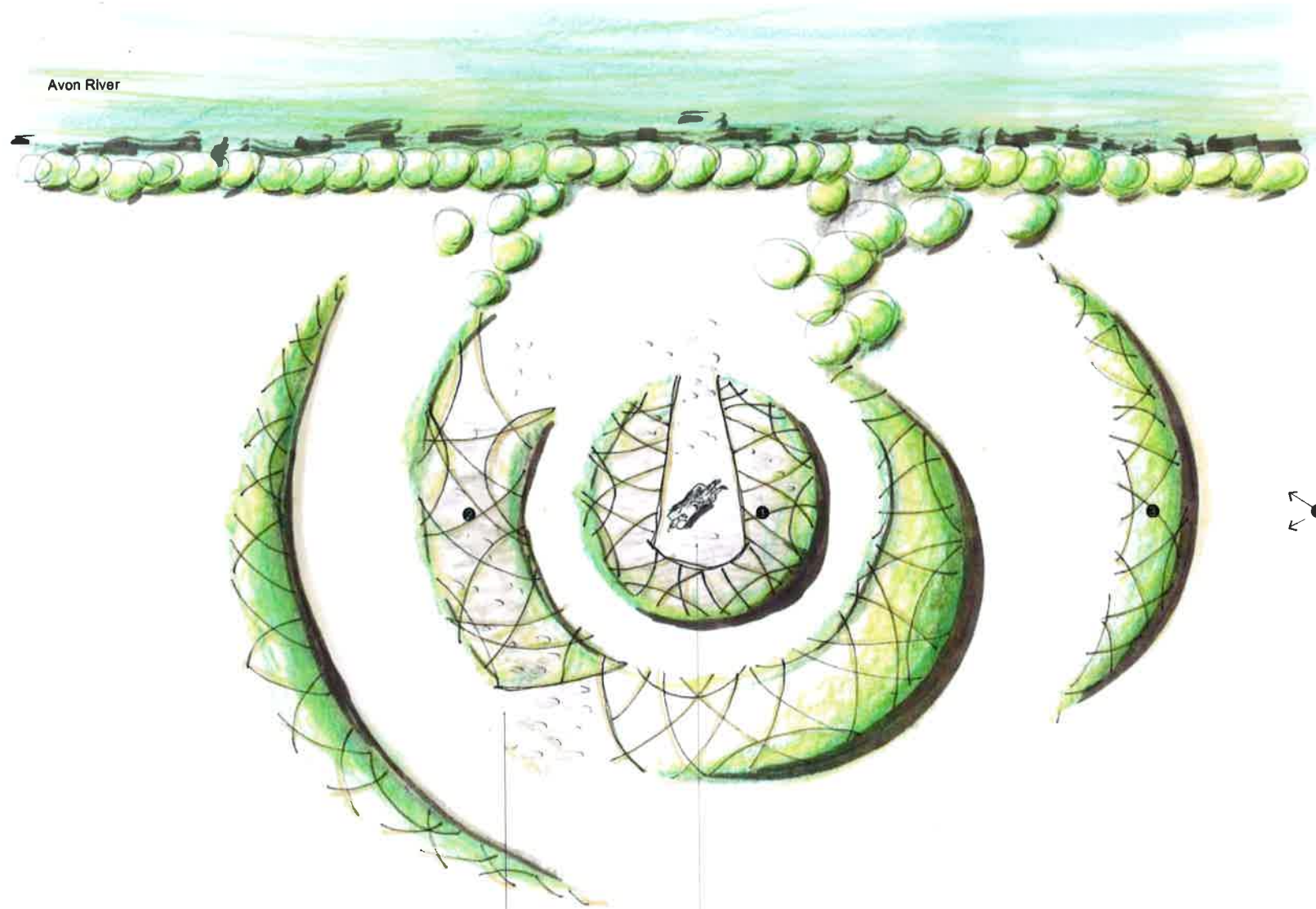


A fine textured, evergreen vine would cover the structure, blending it into the landscape. Planted in pots placed in shallow holes enables easy relocation.

places of tranquillity

background

prepared for Healthy Christchurch
designed by Megan Walker
May 2012 | LASC 215 | Lincoln University



Avon River

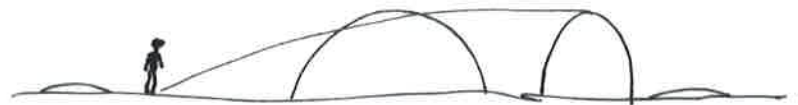
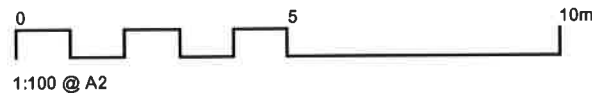
The design consists of a concentric formation of woven wooden rings. They radiate out from the centre, forming a physical barrier and concealing the entrance to the inner sanctuary. This makes the reaching the inner space a reward for perseverance.

The only entrance to the central area is through the tunnel. Passing through the structure is a journey that engages the visitor with the site. The path is lined with large, loosely placed recycled pavers that can easily be relocated. The central space is open and invites the visitor to wander around. It is connected to the river, offering views of the gently flowing clear water.

The central dome can only be approached from the front, which means the people relaxing inside will not be surprised by new visitors. It provides an intimate space in which people can feel safe and protected. It opens out to the sky enabling visitors to connect with God or just let their thoughts roam.

The spaces between the structure are designed for strolling through. They do not dictate a use and allow quiet contemplation. All paths lead to the river, but only one leads to the sanctuary.

The rings diminish in height as they radiate (seen in the section below) mimicking natural wave action. As the vines grow over, the structure will blend into the landscape leaving a gentle undulating form in the ground.



- Looking out from within the sanctuary, the eye is drawn out above the treetops then up to the sky. The loosely woven canopy creates a soft sense of enclosure and promotes relaxation. The seat gently rocks and allows the user to lean back and look skyward with their neck supported.
- Vision to the end of the path is partially obscured by the arches and the curve in the path, which creates a sense of mystery and encourages exploration.
- The outer 'ripples' only just break the ground's surface. The structure will blend into the earth as the vines grow.
- The view West over the site shows how 'ripples' form an open and airy, yet enclosed central space.

