

COME TO YOUR SENSES...

Issues, Design and Use in Sensory Gardens



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Historical background

- The concept of multi sensory environment was originated by Hulsegge and Verheul in the 70s at the Hartenberg Institute, Netherlands where they created the first snoezelen room.
- In the UK, the concept was developed in hospitals, later integrated in special schools as a multi-sensory curriculum.
- The initial idea of sensory gardens derived from the horticultural therapy movement (hospitals and rehabilitation units), which developed in the UK in the 70s. As a result, developed more rapidly than sensory gardens, which used to be 'gardens for the blind'.
- In the 80s, visually impaired people challenged the initial ideas about 'gardens for the blind' because the issue of being segregated from able-bodied people was itself beginning to be challenged.

Questions to ask yourself

- *What is a sensory garden?*
- *What makes a sensory garden different from any other garden?*
- *Are not all gardens sensory?*
- *What is a sensory garden composed of?*
- *How do people use or benefit from sensory gardens?*

Learning through the senses

- **mental development**

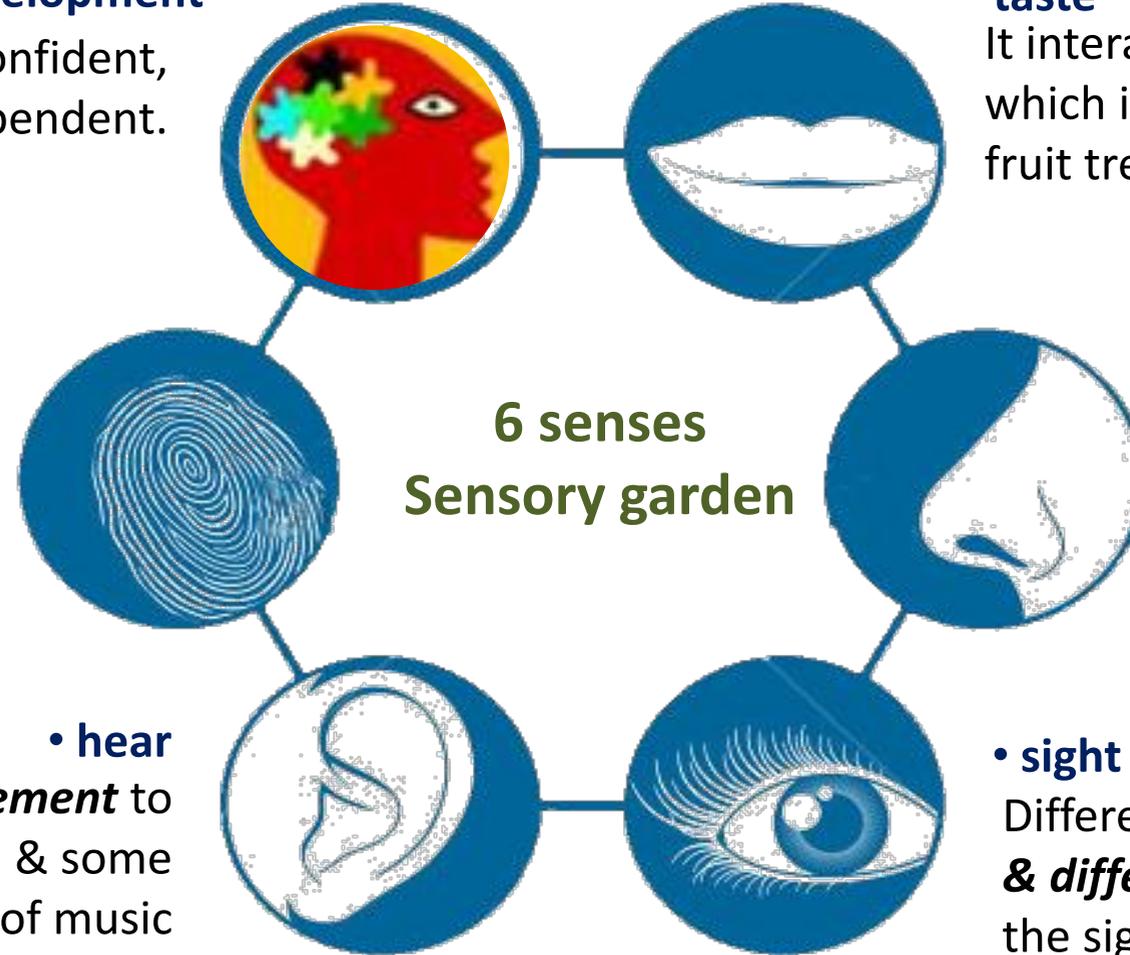
To make the users more confident, positive of mind & independent.

- **touch**

Designed with different types of **pavement, textures & plant materials**. The specialty of this garden is to blend with the natural elements.

- **hear**

- Design with the **water element** to create the sound & some elements of music



- **taste**

It interacts with plant materials which is the **edible plant** such as fruit trees & herbs

- **smell**

variety of **aromatic plants** that will give different types of smell, each space will have a different type of plant & smell to indicate of the spaces.

- **sight**

Different **colours, textures, leaves & different height** to stimulate & the sight senses of people

Issue 1: Inaccessible water feature

Issue 2: Lack of water feature

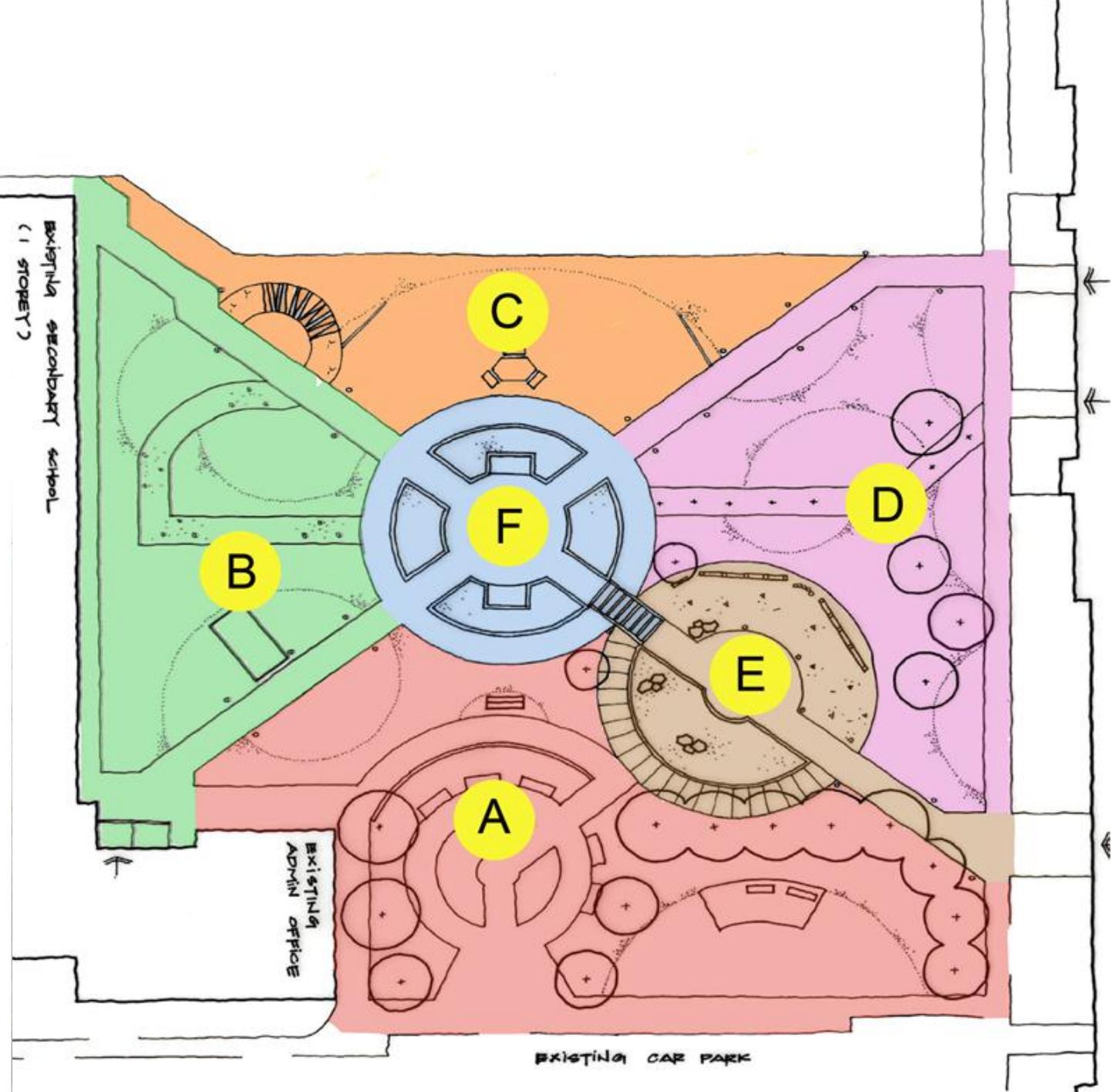
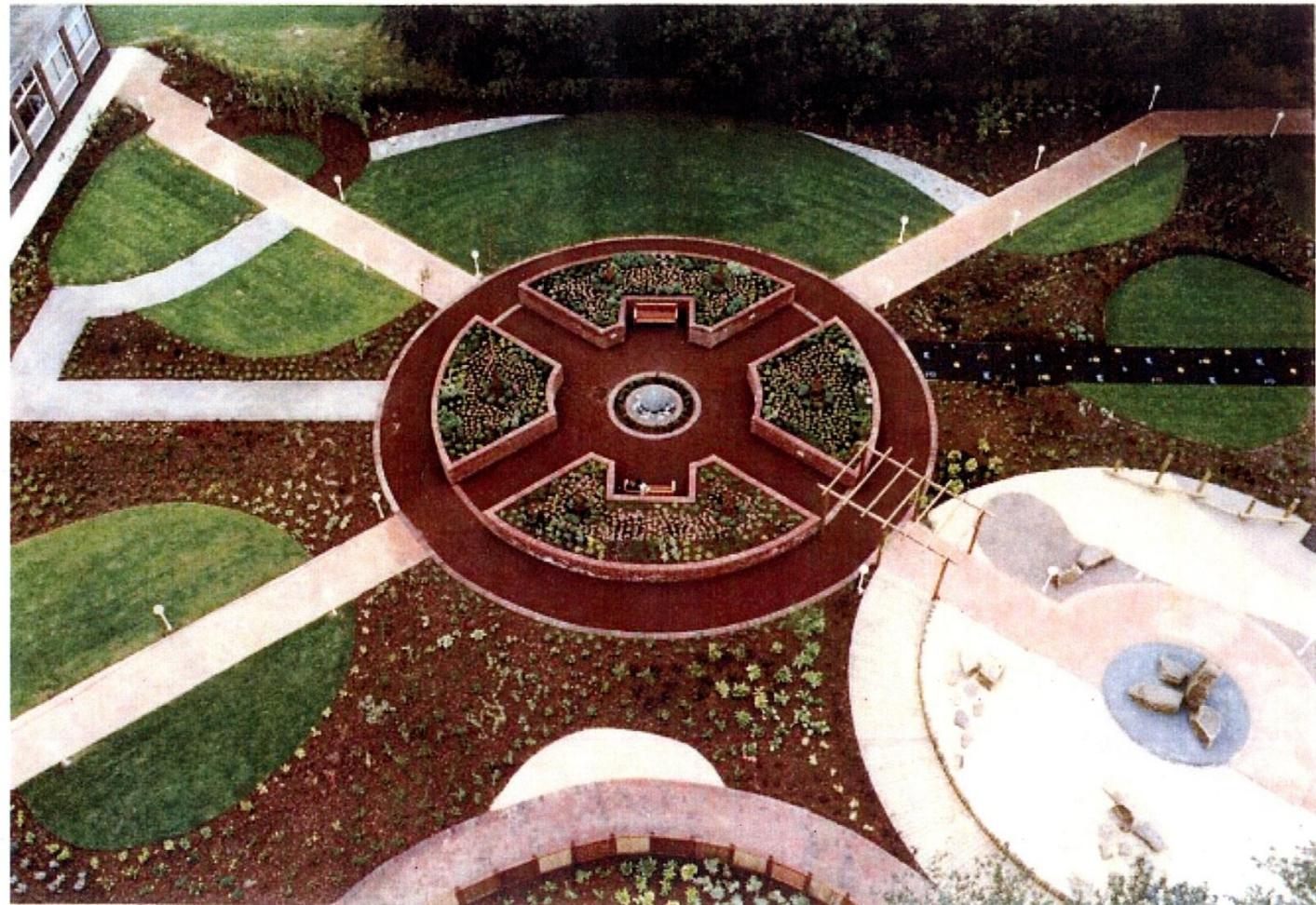
Issue 3: Inaccessible surface material

Issue 4: Steps and ramps

Issue 5: Maintenance

Issue 6: Durability and Usability

Access from all directions



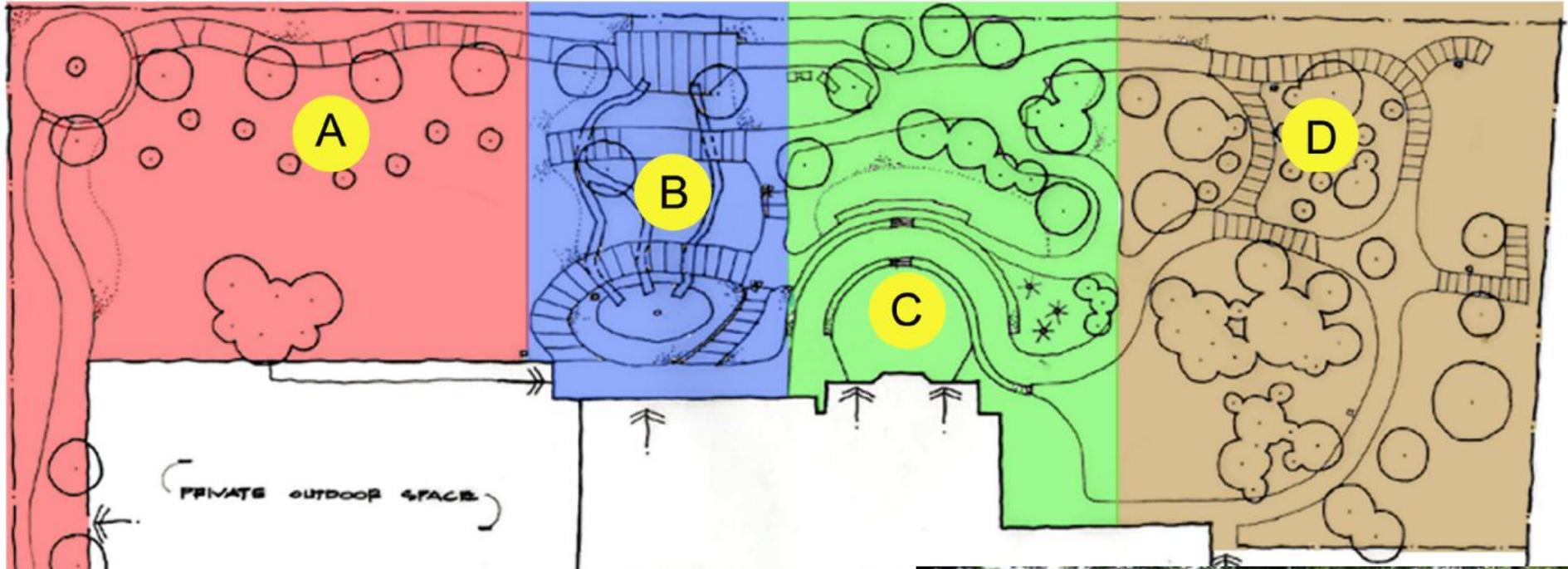




‘With younger children, I’ll probably walk down the black path and comment on the different things that they could see at that picture. I probably would say, ‘Ooo! Butterfly! Ooo!...’ So you will be bringing language in there’ (Barker, J.; speech therapist)



DARLEYDALE DRIVE



Continuous accessibility



Woodland Garden



Water Garden



One morning, a group of staff and students with various kinds of impairment were walking hand in hand, through the sensory garden to find the perfect tree to do some tree-rubbing. As they neared a huge shady tree, a teacher said, *'Let's feel this tree'*. She placed her hands on the tree trunk. A student moved her hands over the bark and slid his arms around the trunk until they met. His face was touching the bark and he said, *'This is the perfect tree!'* So they all got out their paper and pencils and started a tree-rubbing activity.

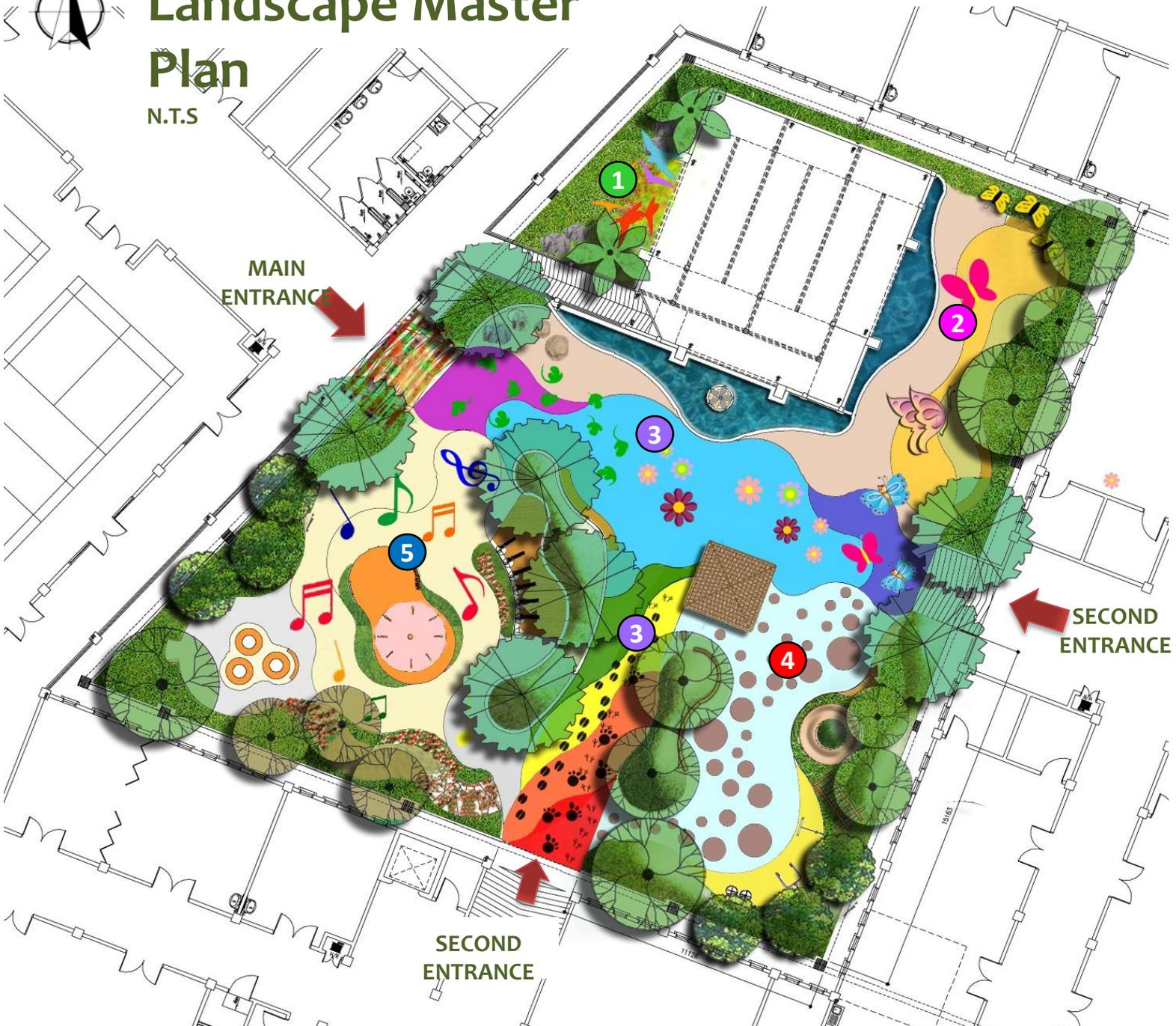


Rainbow Walk



Landscape Master Plan

N.T.S



LEGEND:

1. CHILDREN SCULPTURE IDEA

- Boulders
- Sculpture

2. SCENTED ZONE

- Butterfly Sculpture
- Koi Pond

3. RAINBOW WALK ZONE

- Kinetic Sculpture Water Feature

4. ADVENTURE ZONE

- Tactile Wall
- Bare Foot Walk
- Sand Pit & Earth Bank
- Exercise Equipment

5. MUSIC GARDEN

- Wind Chime
- Piano Board Walk
- Music Zone
- Willow Tunnel

Rainbow Walk



Music Garden



Scented Garden

TREES



Gardenia carinata
(Cempaka Kedah)

SHRUBS



Brunfelsia calycina
(Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow)



Cananga odorata 'fruticosa'
(Kenanga)



Cestrum diurnum
(Chinaink Berry)



Cestrum geonum
(Night Cestrum)



Cestrum nocturnum
(Sundal Malam)



Jasminum sambac
(Jasmin)

Rainbow Walk

TREES



Callistemon viminalis
(Bottle Brush)



Tecoma stans
(Yellow Bell)

SHRUBS



Belamcanda chinensis
(Leopard Flower)



Iris pseudacorus
(Yellow Iris)



Ixora cocinea 'Sunkist red'
(Siantan Sunkist Merah)



Pisonia alba
(Mengkudu Putih)



Plumbago capensis
(Plumbago Flower)



Thunbergia erecta
(Blue Bell)

Conclusion: So what is it about the environment that is engaging?

- A good circulation network and a variety of garden features affording easy way finding
- A variety of features positioned along pathways and areas with easy access, afford diverse activities for environmental and sensory learning

ASPECTS

- i. Accessibility to and functionality of the garden features
- ii. The layout of the circulation network, i.e. Sensory Trail
- iii. Sensory value, not focusing only on the aesthetics of visual composition

RECOMMENDATIONS

Site planning and spatial location of the garden in relation to the site context; Accessibility, way finding and circulation network; Physical designed elements; Soft landscape and Wildlife refuge; Microclimate; Safety; and Maintenance.

References

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