

Rouge National Urban Park

Visitor, learning & community centre

SCHEMATIC DESIGN CONCEPTS

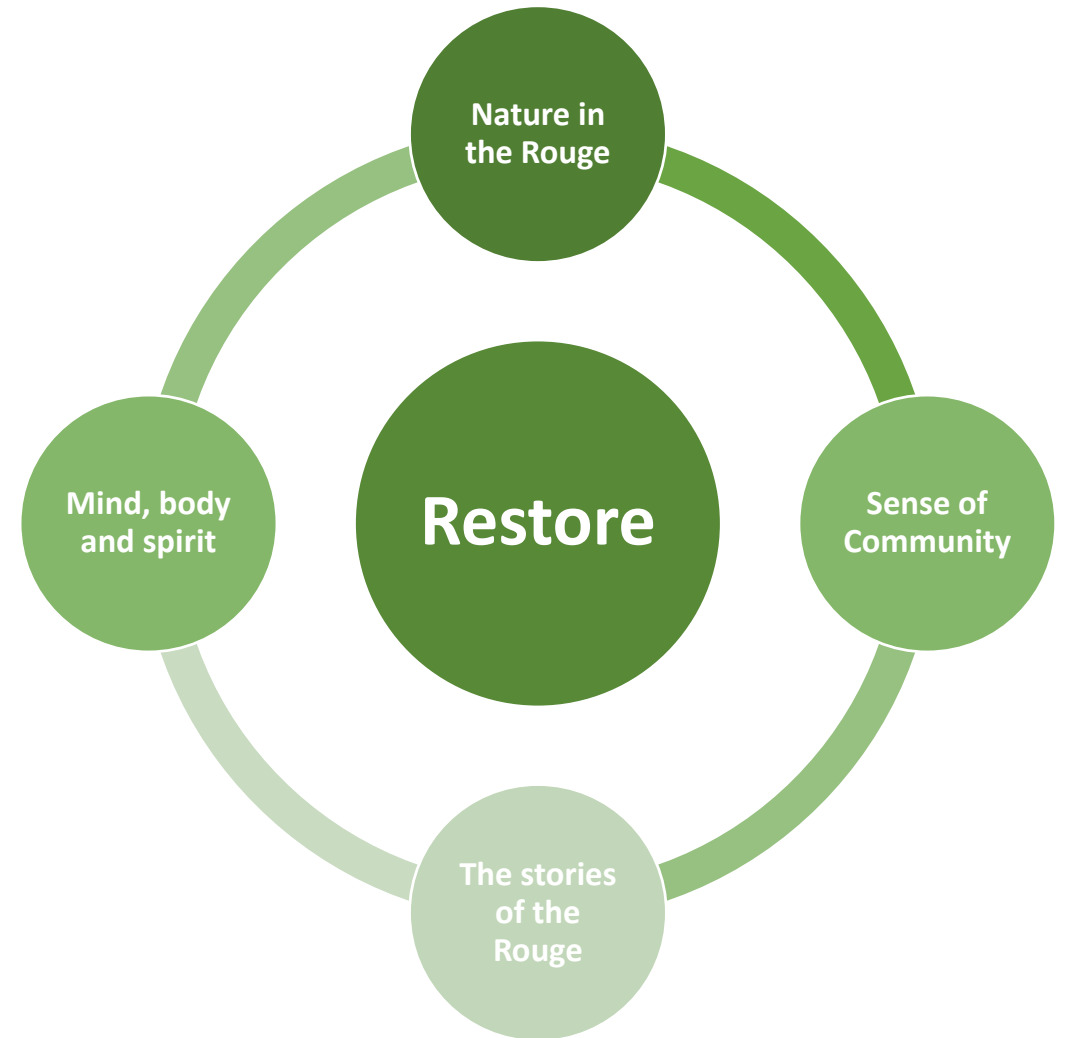


The BIG idea

Restoration is the overarching theme that will be embedded in and explored through the design and experience of the site. We view the Rouge as a powerful restorative force - one that continually inspires renewed ways of living with and caring for nature and one another.

To us, 'restoration' inspires opportunities to:

- **Restore our relationship with nature in the Rouge:** the site will present diverse opportunities to connect with the surroundings and learn about nature using all of our senses.
- **Hear and share the diverse stories of the Rouge:** the site will offer opportunities to learn about the layered stories of the people and land that make up the park's natural, cultural and agricultural history and present, including understanding Indigenous perspectives.
- **Renew a sense of community:** the site will support opportunities to build connections with others through accessible and inclusive shared experiences.
- **Reconnect with ourselves — mind, body and spirit:** the site will offer opportunities to nourish ourselves by providing choices for activity and for calm, together and in solitude.



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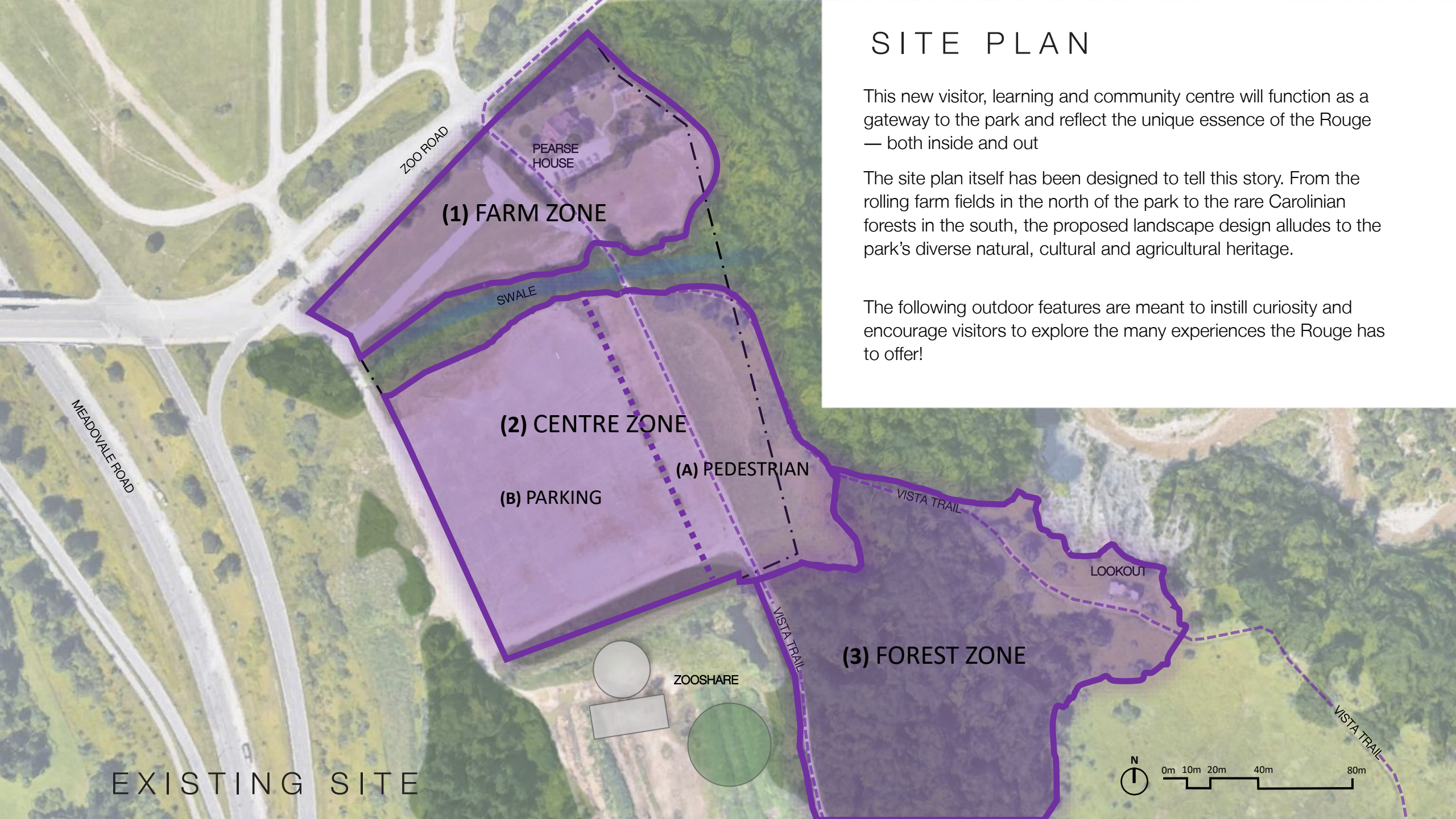
LANDSCAPE DESIGN AND OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

SITE PLAN

This new visitor, learning and community centre will function as a gateway to the park and reflect the unique essence of the Rouge — both inside and out

The site plan itself has been designed to tell this story. From the rolling farm fields in the north of the park to the rare Carolinian forests in the south, the proposed landscape design alludes to the park's diverse natural, cultural and agricultural heritage.

The following outdoor features are meant to instill curiosity and encourage visitors to explore the many experiences the Rouge has to offer!



(1) FARM ZONE

PEARSE HOUSE

ZOO ROAD

SWALE

(2) CENTRE ZONE

(A) PEDESTRIAN

(B) PARKING

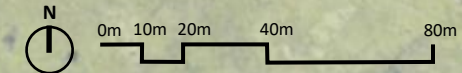
VISTA TRAIL

LOOKOUT

(3) FOREST ZONE

ZOOSHARE

VISTA TRAIL



EXISTING SITE

FARM ZONE

The portion of site known as the “Farm Zone” welcomes people arriving at the north end of the site. A meeting circle is located near the north-west corner and provides a recognizable entrance to the site for pedestrians and cyclists, including those arriving by public transit.

An orchard of semi-dwarf apple trees, grown from heritage plant grafts, frames the view of historic Pearse House from this point. The adjacent path leads visitors towards the visitor centre building. This path and the orchard are bordered by pollinator and butterfly gardens. At the east end of the path is a trailhead which serves as a meeting place for hikers.

Just past the trailhead is a demonstration garden. It is planted primarily with annual vegetables, herbs and medicinals, providing learning opportunities related to farming practices and complimentary planting. It provides a venue to learn about the agricultural heritage of the park in a way that engages all the senses.

KEY ELEMENTS:

- Apple orchard
- Pollinator and butterfly gardens
- Demonstration gardens
- Orientation trailhead



CENTRE ZONE

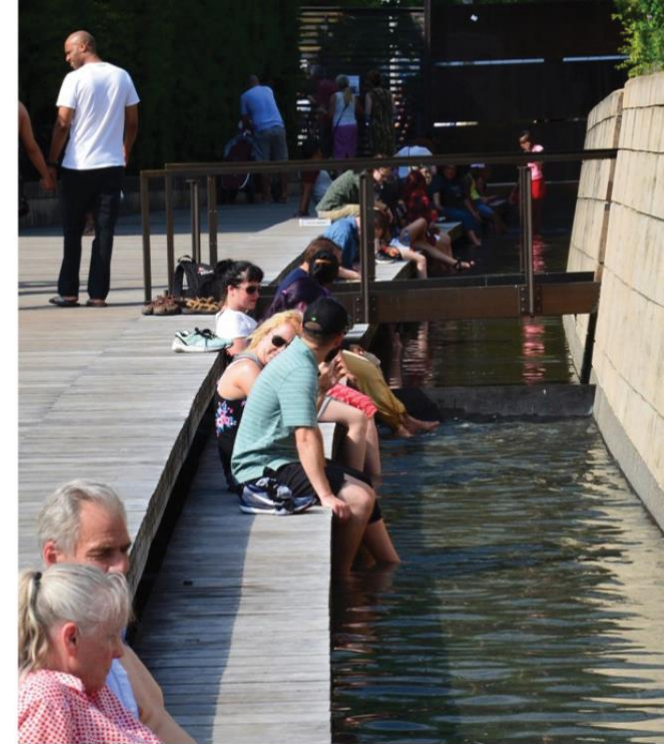
This central zone includes an inviting open green space, a broad path, a visually compelling mound and a parking area.

The green space functions in the same way as the traditional public square in the centre of many towns and villages. A nearby outdoor communal kitchen will provide opportunities for visitors to connect and share through food. A variety of events will take place here, including formal or casual celebrations that will create lasting memories for visitors of all ages.

Adjacent to the green space is a broad path, which can serve multiple purposes. In addition to facilitating movement, it will accommodate impromptu pop-up events of various types and scale. A mound separates the parking area from the pedestrian area and screens the view of the nearby ZooShare facility. Nestled at the far edge of the event green will be a dedicated sharing circle where visitors will be invited to learn about Indigenous connections to the park. Immersive storytelling installations will be layered throughout the landscape for visitors to enjoy and explore.

KEY ELEMENTS:

- Events green
- Pedestrian path + plaza
- Mounds
- Outdoor communal kitchen
- Indigenous sharing circle
- Outdoor storytelling installations



FOREST ZONE

The southern portion of the site is an extension of the forested slopes that frame the valley to the east.

A trail made of native mineral soil runs from north to south, connecting the open green field with edible forest garden. You can walk barefoot on this trail and feel the connection with the living earth beneath your feet. Midway through this forested zone is a small clearing, suitable for quiet contemplation or intimate group storytelling.

An edible forest garden of multi-layered perennial plant species is located at the south limit of the zone. Fruit and nut trees, with an understory of berry bushes, perennial vegetables and a healthy living soil, create a balanced food ecosystem.

KEY ELEMENTS:

- New forest trail
- Forest garden
- Contemplative space





Rouge National Urban Park

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SCHEMATIC DESIGN CONCEPT 1

Solstice Courtyard

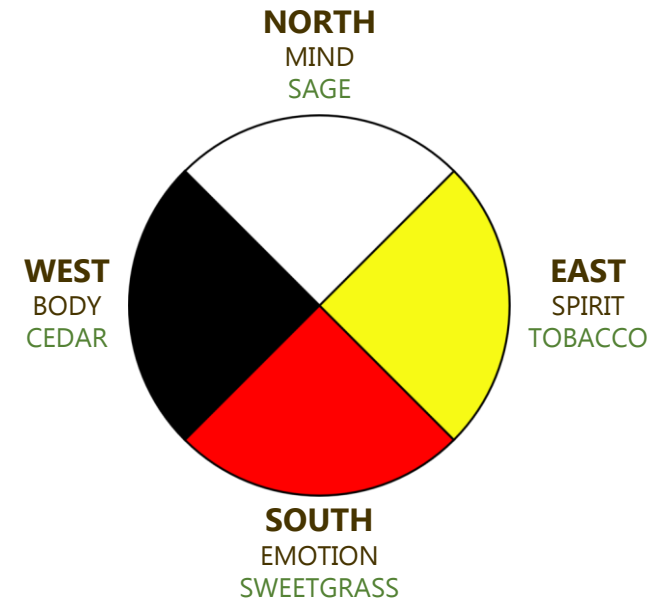
CONCEPT 1

Solstice Courtyard

Design Inspiration

The movement of the sun and the cycle of the seasons are unifying forces that resonate with all people across time and space. It is in accordance with these rotations that we mark time and find our direction.

This design concept is shaped by the solstice itself and by the natural elements that set the pace for how we live.



The Medicine Wheel (just one example of many)



CONCEPT 1

Solstice Courtyard

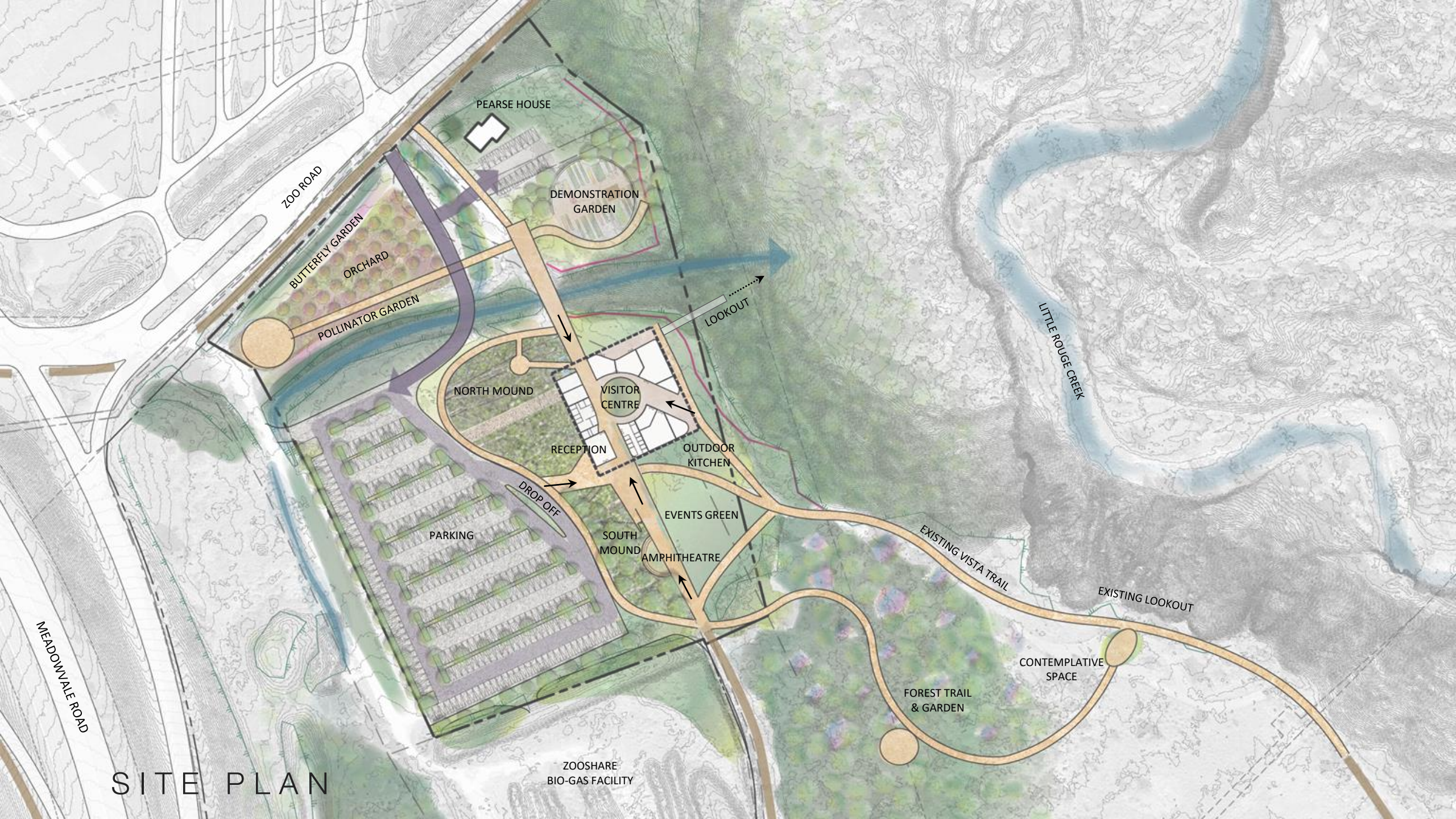
Design Concept

The building itself acts as a gateway to the site. The Rouge walking trails enter and bisect the building, carving it into three small pavilions, which are bound together under a low-slung roof canopy. At the heart of the building, a courtyard space serves as a memorable gathering point at the intersection of these trails. The courtyard serves to amplify an experience of nature by:

- Framing views to the sky, and the site beyond
- Tracing the movement of the sun through the day, and marking the seasons
- Allowing the elements of rain, snow and wind to enter, shape and change the nature of the space
- Playing on the senses through a garden of medicinal and/or fragrant plantings

The rest of the building program radiates around the courtyard but is extroverted to connect to the surrounding outdoor spaces.





PEARSE HOUSE

DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

ZOO ROAD

BUTTERFLY GARDEN
ORCHARD

POLLINATOR GARDEN

LOOKOUT

NORTH MOUND

VISITOR CENTRE

RECEPTION

OUTDOOR KITCHEN

DROP OFF

PARKING

EVENTS GREEN

SOUTH MOUND

AMPHITHEATRE

EXISTING VISTA TRAIL

EXISTING LOOKOUT

CONTEMPLATIVE SPACE

FOREST TRAIL & GARDEN

ZOOSHARE
BIO-GAS FACILITY

MEADOWVALE ROAD

LITTLE ROUGE CREEK

SITE PLAN

FLOOR PLAN

The building acts as a gateway to Rouge National Urban Park. The layout is split into three pavilions serving different functions:

- **LEARN:** Multi-purpose programming and event spaces
- **ASK:** Visitor reception area, gift shop and staff space
- **EAT:** Food service and dining space adjacent to inclusive public washrooms



A canopy floats over all three pavilions that blends indoor and outdoor space.

The mounds and the “ASK” pavilion serve to focus the view on green space, and acts as a buffer to the nearby biogas facility.



SOLSTICE

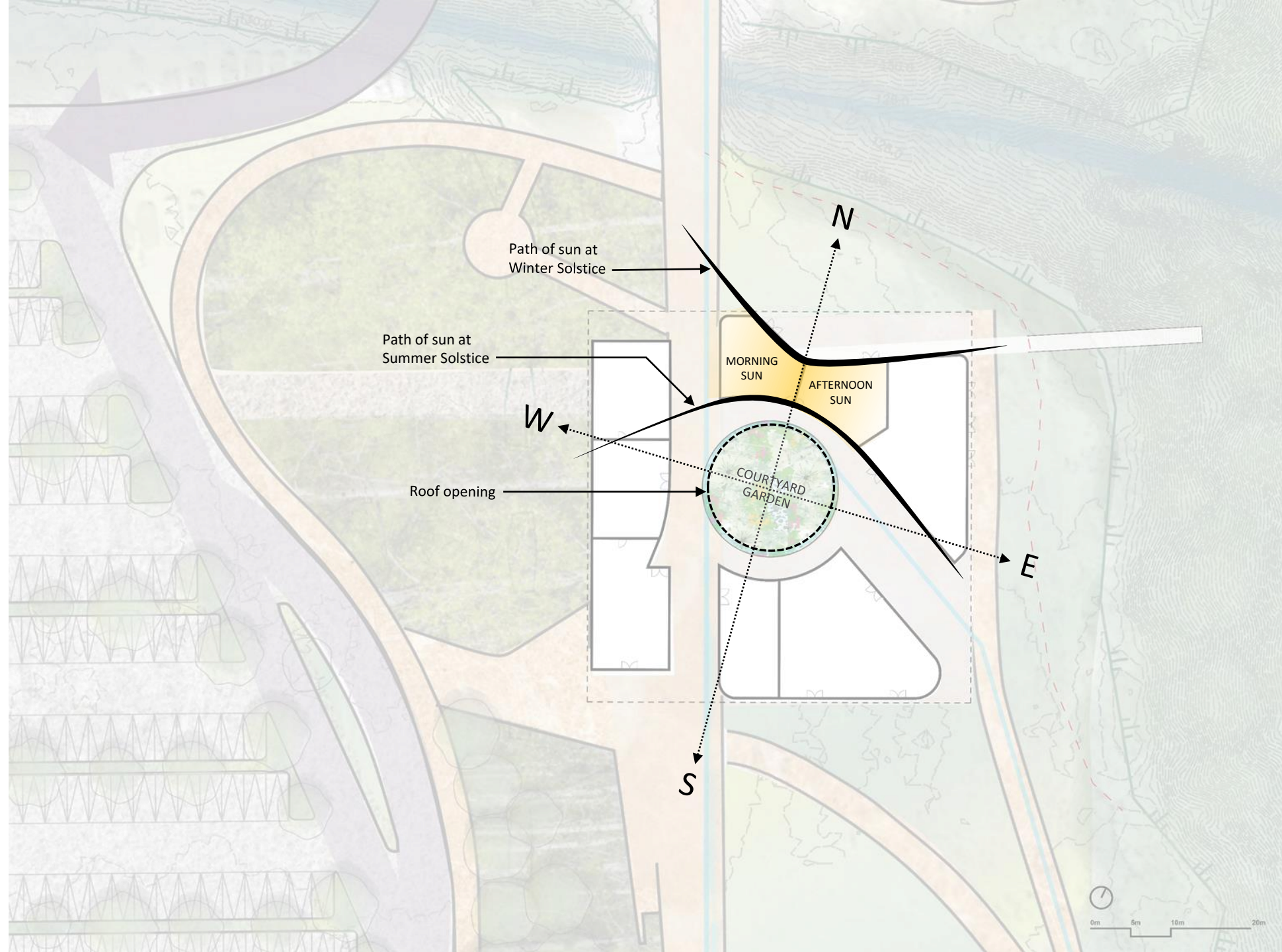
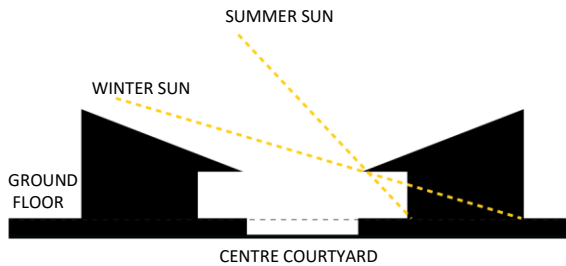
The building is shaped by the Solstice.

Sun coming through the round roof opening traces the path of time on the floor of the building.

During summer solstice, the sun is highest in the sky and traces a path along the courtyard side of the learning spaces.

During winter solstice, the sun is at its lowest and comes deeper into the building, tracing the north exterior wall of the leaning spaces.

This concept was inspired by Indigenous partners who shared that winter is a time for indoor storytelling.



INTERIOR & EXTERIOR CONNECTION

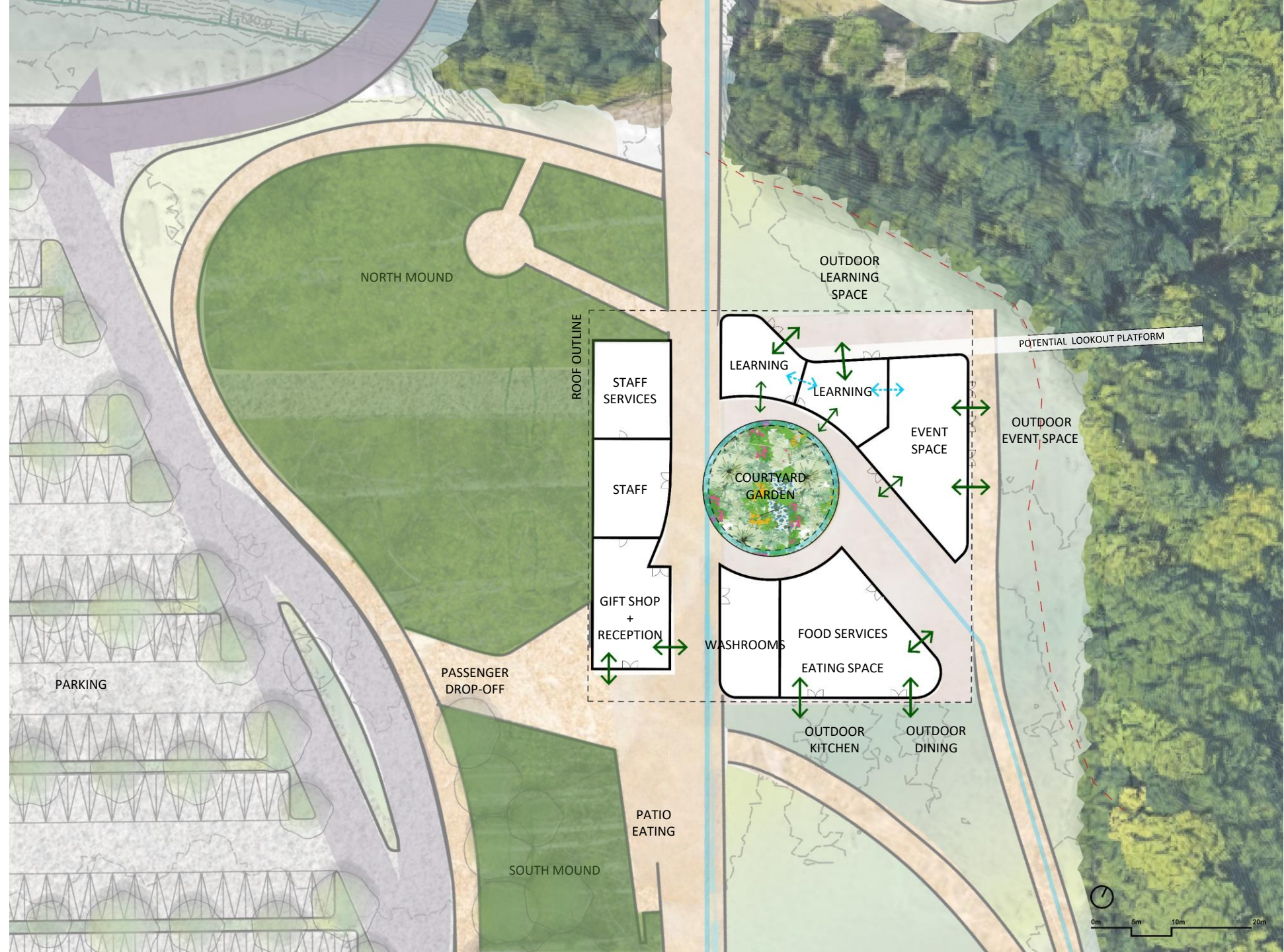
The central courtyard creates an introspective and reflective moment at the centre of the building, but the three pavilions have a very extroverted relationship with the surrounding outdoor space.

The learning spaces face the courtyard to the south, as well as a generous outdoor green space and covered patio to the north.

The events space also spills out on to a green space to the east.

The eating space can spill out to covered areas on either side, or to the events green to the south.

The events and learning spaces can be expanded into each other to create larger areas for different functions.

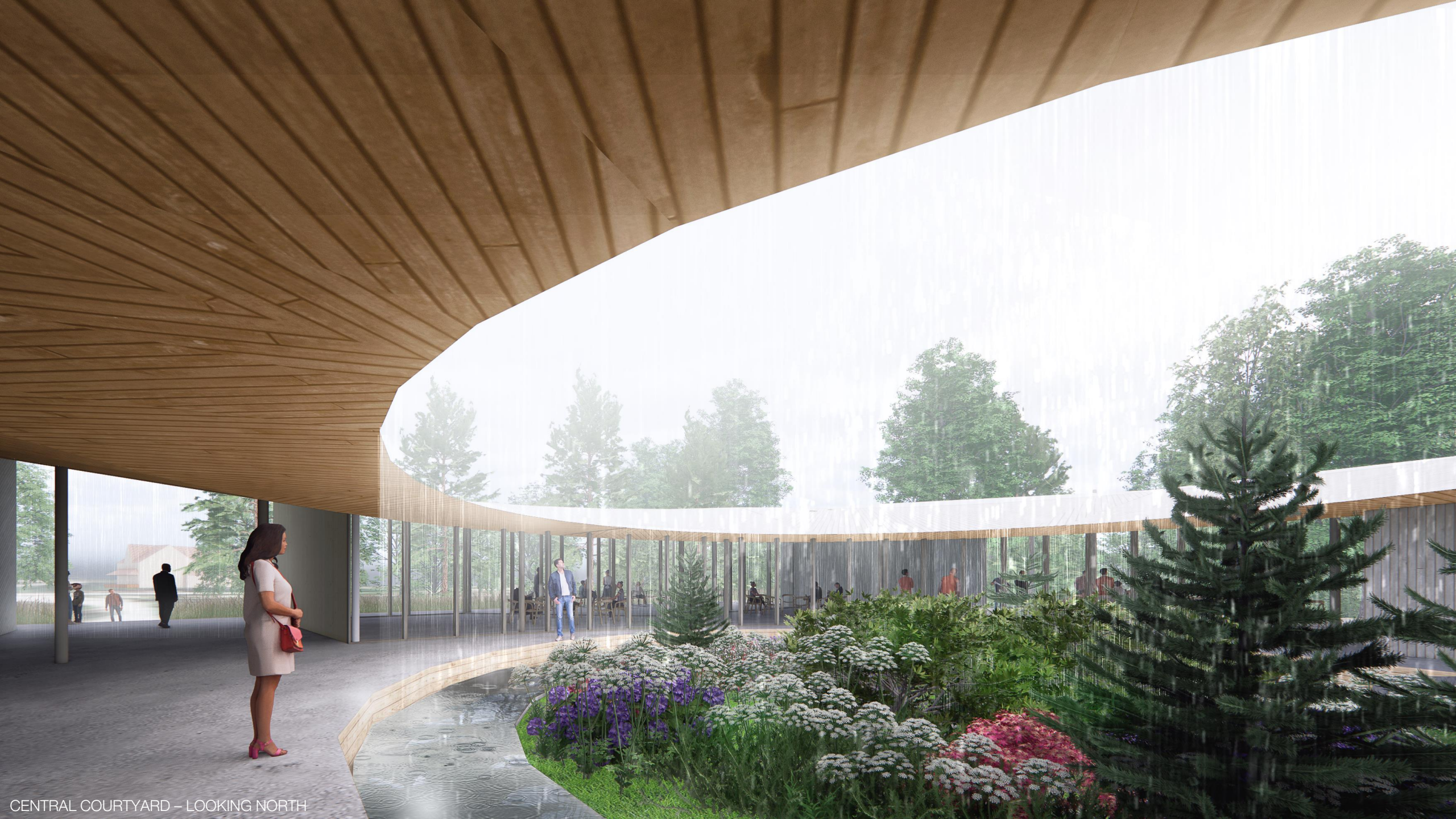




VIEW OF NORTH ENTRY



CENTRAL COURTYARD – LOOKING SOUTH



CENTRAL COURTYARD – LOOKING NORTH



VIEW OF RECEPTION / SOUTH ENTRY



VIEW OF POTENTIAL ACCESSIBLE LOOKOUT PLATFORM

The feasibility of this platform is still being examined, but if possible, would add a great new opportunity to view the Rouge Valley.



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SCHEMATIC DESIGN CONCEPT 2
Rooftop Deck

CONCEPT 2

Rooftop Deck

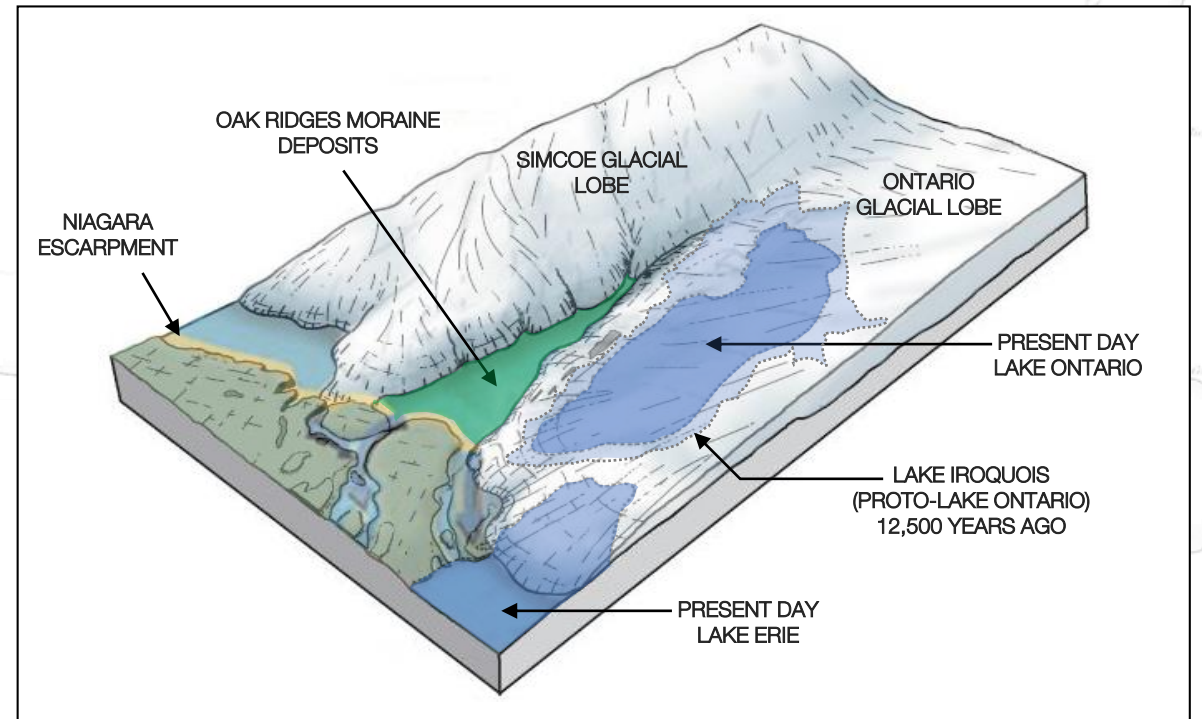
Design Inspirations

Mother earth and the human habitation on her leave traces from which we can learn much about our natural and cultural history.

Traces of the glaciers which shaped the Rouge can still be seen today. Water flowing from the Oak Ridges Moraine, which was deposited by the retreating glaciers, carved out all the various watersheds leading down to Lake Ontario, including the Rouge.

Over these millennia, many peoples have called these lands home and have left their own mark.

This design concept is inspired by these traces and their discovery, signifying a growing appreciation for our collective lands and cultures. These traces teach us many lessons about how to continually improve our relationships with each other, and with the earth itself.



Regression of the glaciers, creation of Lake Iroquois / Lake Ontario / Oak Ridges Moraine

CONCEPT 2

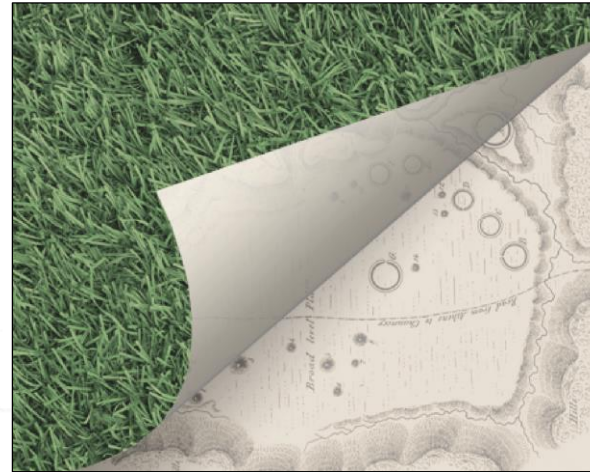
Rooftop Deck

Design Concept

This design scheme expresses this peeling back of the earth to expose the traces of the past, creating an evocative space both under, within, and on top of the earth to inhabit.

A grass covered roof peels away from grade and offers passage up to and over the rooftop, leading to a potential lookout platform that extends beyond the tree line for a panoramic view over the Rouge Valley.

The structure of the roof is meant to evoke the simple and elegant wood construction of both First Nations structures and those of the barns of the Rouge.





PEARSE HOUSE

DEMONSTRATION GARDENS

ZOO ROAD

BUTTERFLY GARDEN

ORCHARD

POLLINATOR GARDEN

DROP OFF

VISITOR CENTRE

RECEPTION

OUTDOOR KITCHEN

EVENTS GREEN

MOUND

AMPHITHEATRE

PARKING

ZOO SHARE
BIO-GAS FACILITY

LITTLE ROUGE CREEK

LOOKOUT

EXISTING VISTA TRAIL

EXISTING LOOKOUT

CONTEMPLATIVE SPACE

FOREST TRAIL + GARDEN

MEADOWVALE ROAD

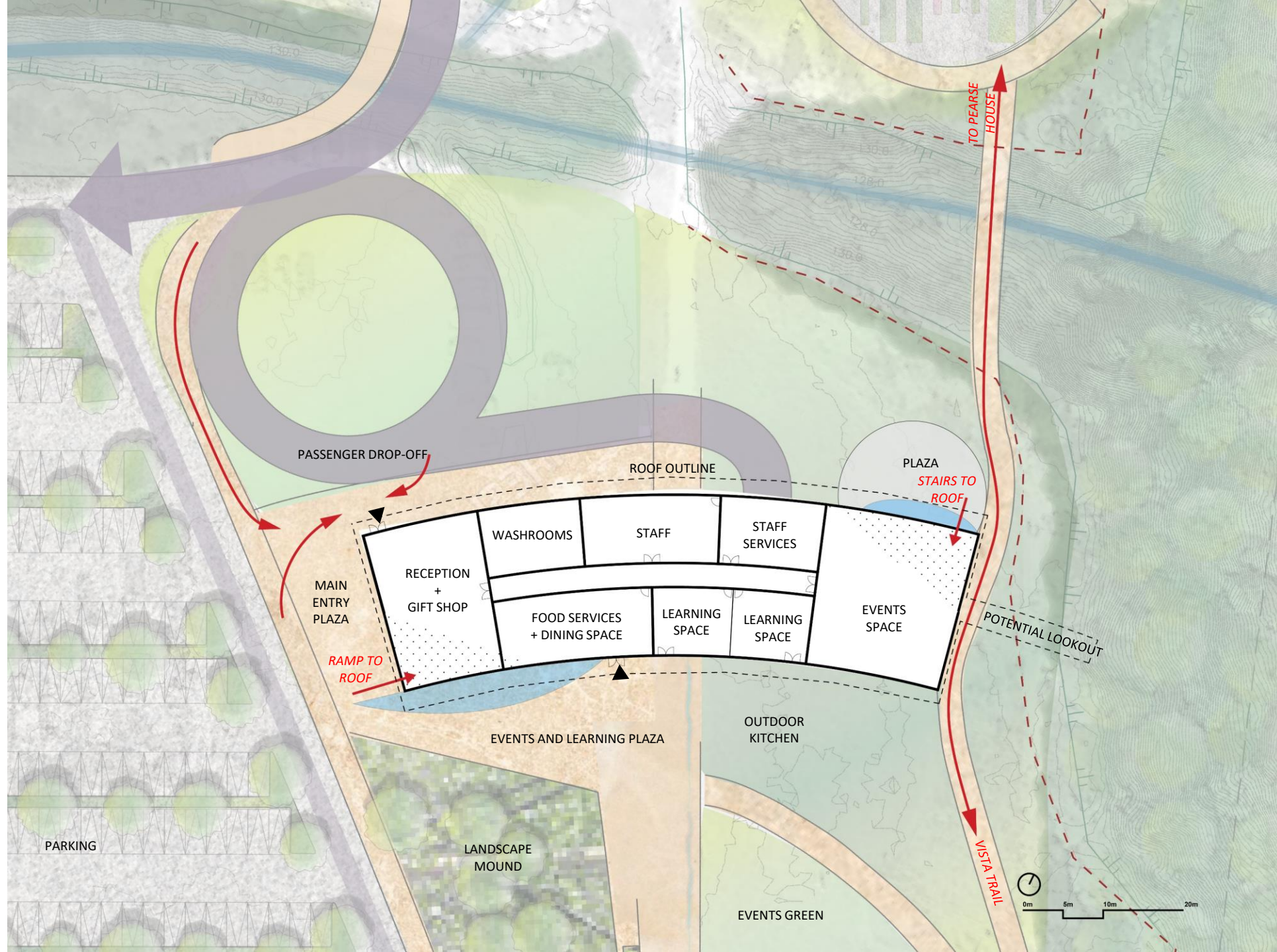
SITE PLAN

FLOOR PLAN

This design concept organizes all building spaces into one compact floor plan. This plan is shaped as a gently curved bar and is covered by a twisted roof form.

The roof drops down to grade at the south-west, where a gentle ramp takes visitors up to a green rooftop. At the north-east corner, a staircase brings visitors back to grade into an outdoor plaza.

The roof also heaves up to the sky to create more lofty and visible spaces for both the reception space and the multipurpose events space.



INTERIOR & EXTERIOR CONNECTION

The main reception and gift shop on the north-west corner of the building are highly visible from the main vehicular entry and passenger drop-off loop.

Food services, events and learning spaces spill out to the events green to the south to allow for much larger events to have both indoor and outdoor space.

The events and learning spaces can be combined to accommodate larger functions.

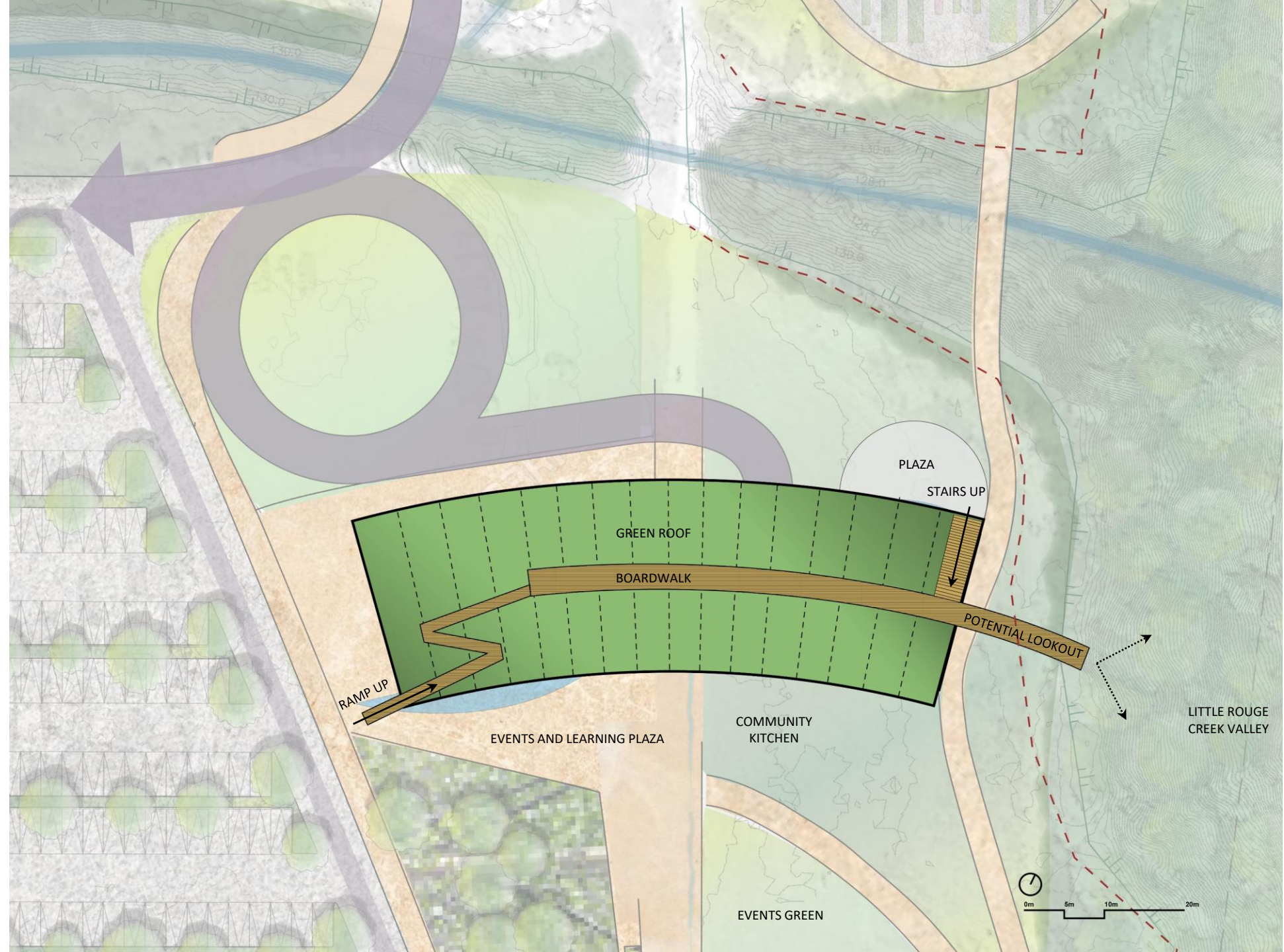
A smaller and more intimate plaza is located at the north-east corner of the building, surrounded by forest, and grants access to the roof-top and the Vista trail.



ROOF PLAN

The green rooftop of this scheme is accessible via a gentle ramp at the south-west, and stairs at the north-east. If feasible, the boardwalk path on the ridge-line of the roof will extend out through the forest canopy to provide a stunning new lookout into the Rouge Valley.

The accessible rooftop provides a number of programming opportunities and expands the usable space of the building. The roof could include a terraced sitting area facing the Events and Learning Plaza for a special event or concert. The roof could include a terraced sitting area facing the Events and Learning Plaza for a special event or concert. The stairs down to the plaza would also be a perfect spot to sit and enjoy a lecture or more intimate learning opportunity.

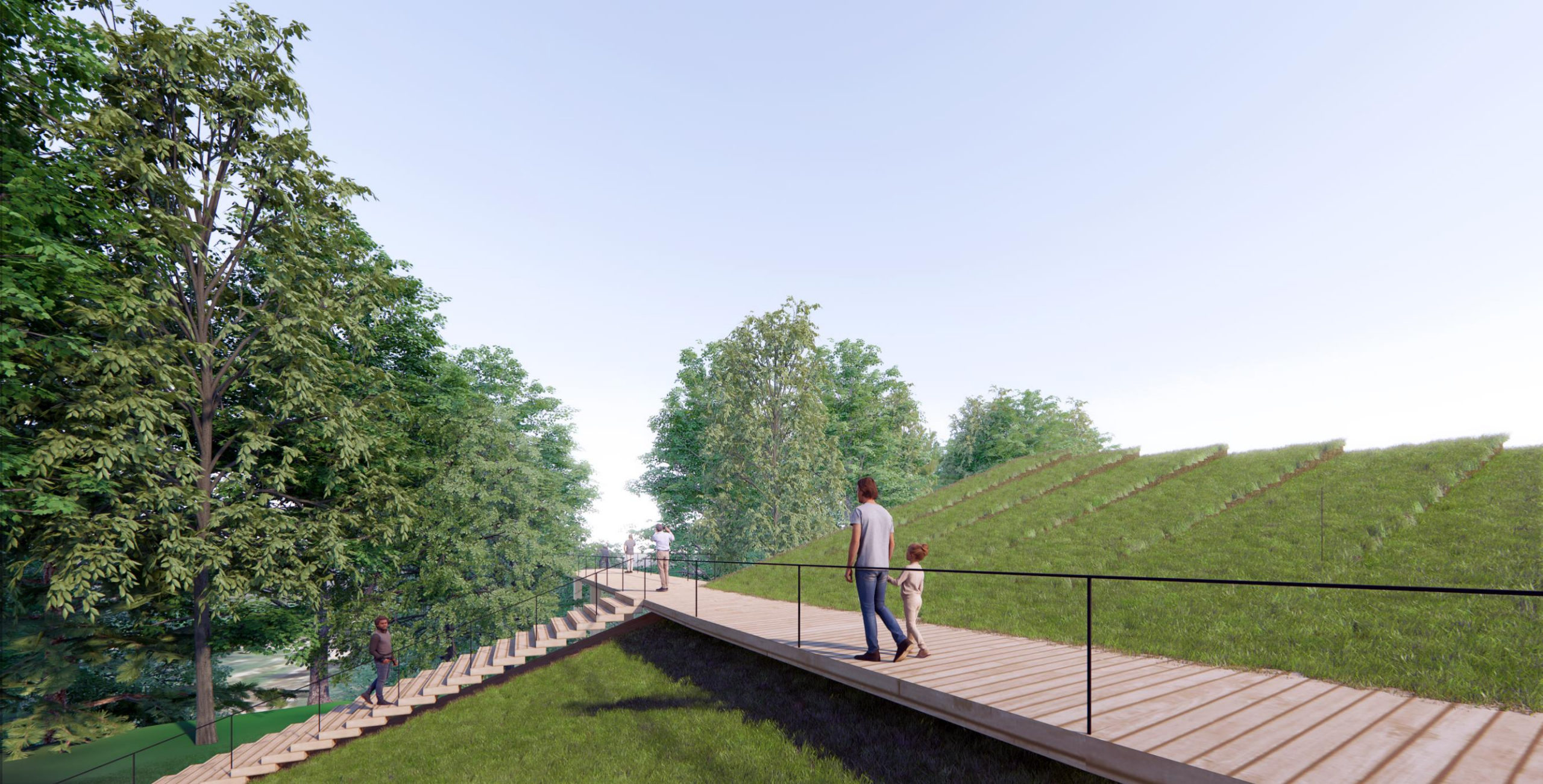




VIEW OF RECEPTION / MAIN SOUTH ENTRY



VIEW OF RAMP TO GREEN ROOFTOP



VIEW OF POTENTIAL ROOFTOP LOOKOUT PLATFORM

The feasibility of this platform is still being examined, but if possible, would add a great new opportunity to view the Rouge Valley.



VIEW OF SOUTH ELEVATION FROM EVENTS GREEN



FOOD SERVICES + DINING AREA



INDOOR EVENTS SPACE



NIGHT VIEW FROM SOUTH



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SCHEMATIC DESIGN CONCEPT 3
Forest Passage

MORIYAMA & TESHIMA ARCHITECTS WITH TWO ROW ARCHITECT
and STUDIO IAN GRAY

CONCEPT 3

Forest Passage

Design Inspirations

The Carrying Place Trail was an overland route connecting Lake Ontario to Lake Huron, and the upper Great Lakes beyond, connecting people and goods for trade. The Trail represents a cultural trace across the landscape that endured for millennia.

The eastern arm of the Carrying Place Trail travelled near this site along the east bank of the Little Rouge Creek.

In the 1960's, significant modifications to the site occurred which raised the grades and introduced an east-west drainage swale. This swale is quite deep - over 10 m at the eastern end - and has severed the site into two, disrupting the north-south flow of the Carrying Place Trail that had existed for millennia.



CONCEPT 3

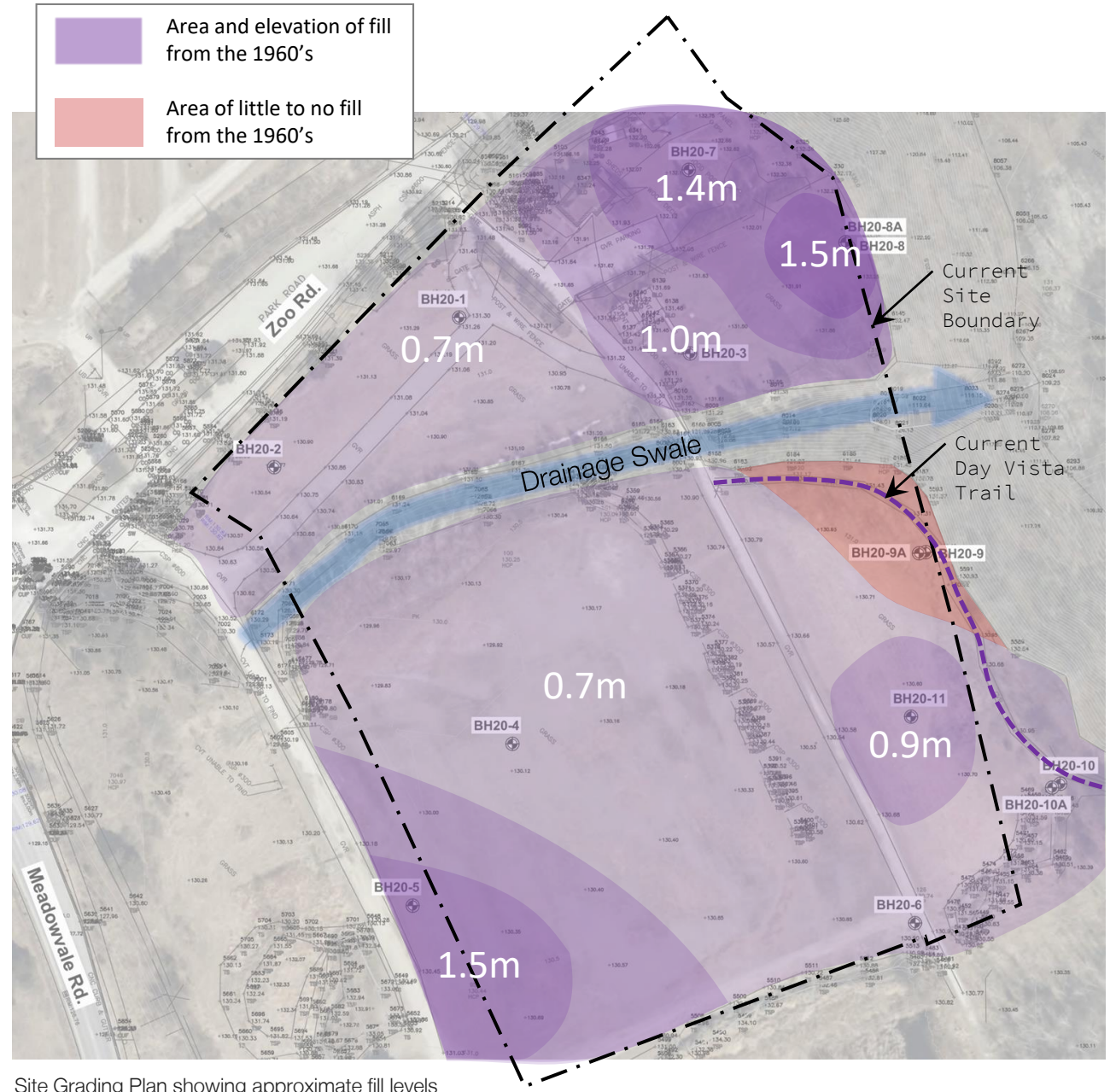
Forest Passage

Design Concept

This design concept attempts to reconnect the site and restore this traditional north-south orientation. This gesture is meant to explore and restore the severed connections in our collective natural and cultural history, as embodied by the Carrying Place Trail.

The alterations of the site topography in the 1960's included raising the grades with new fill material, up to 1.5m deep in some place. The drainage swale was introduced to redirect the water towards the east and down into the Little Rouge Creek Valley. Interestingly, at the current location of the Vista trailhead along the ridge line, very little fill was added, meaning that this small area has remained unchanged for millennia.

As with Concept 2, this design concept also attempts to reveal and explain some of the traces from our natural and cultural history.



Site Grading Plan showing approximate fill levels

SITE PLAN

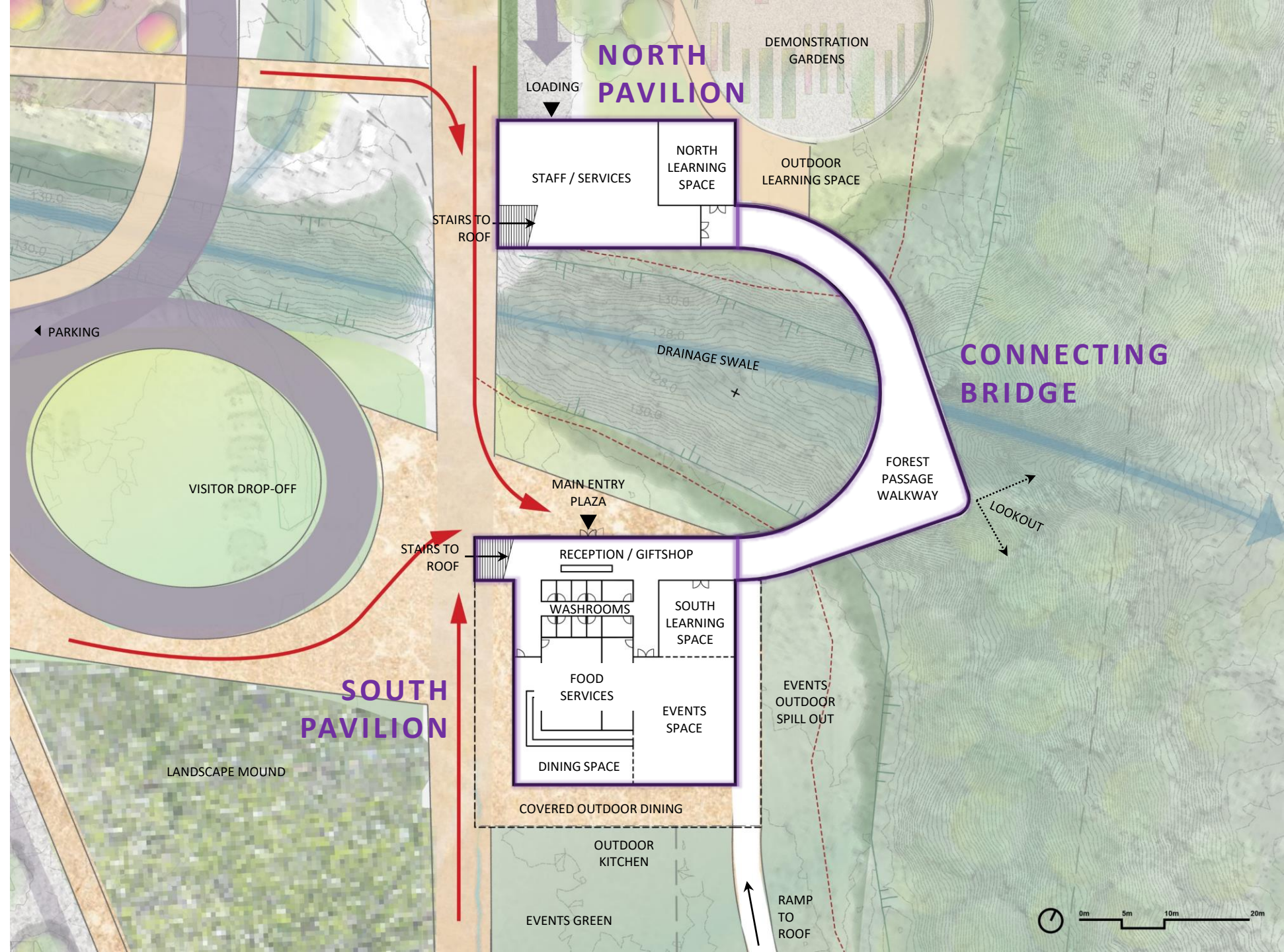


FLOOR PLAN

This concept divides the building program between two pavilions, one on either side of the drainage swale. The North Pavilion contains staff spaces and a learning space connected to the adjacent demonstration garden. The South Pavilion contains most of the public spaces and main public entry.

The two pavilions are connected by a curved bridge structure that arcs out over the swale and Little Rouge Creek Valley. This bridge, called the "Forest Passage" exposes visitors to an experience of stepping into the canopy of trees on the one side, and into the valley on the other.

At the apex of this passage, a sweeping view looks east over the valley and the Carrying Place Trail below. Learning spaces bracket both ends of this gallery, but learning extends throughout the entire space. Similarly, large indoor events can spill out into this gallery to enjoy the stunning valley views.



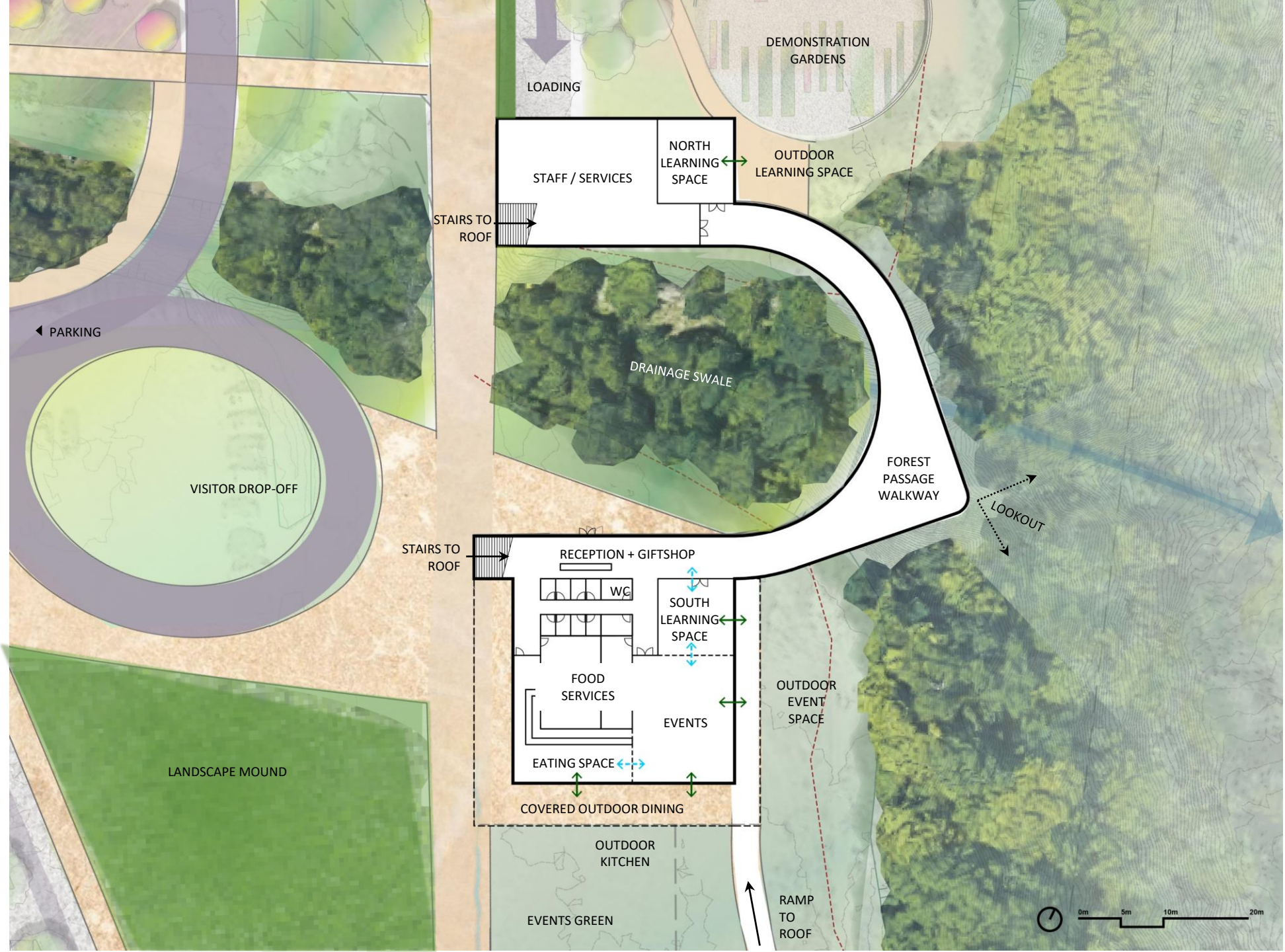
INTERIOR & EXTERIOR CONNECTION

The two pavilions and connecting passage all have unique relationships with the surrounding tree edges. The north pavilion opens up to the demonstration gardens and outdoor learning spaces to the north.

The main entry plaza is bound by the building and the tree edge at the swale, creating a unique experience over the swale and along the bridge that spans it.

The events space and south learning space both open onto the events green to the south and also to a more intimate outdoor space bounded by the trees at the ravine edge.

The events space, two learning spaces and Forest Passage walkway can be combined into one space to accommodate very large events.



ROOF PLAN

The experience of the Forest Passage on the interior of the building extends onto the rooftop as well. Here, visitors can ascend to the roof and look down into the swale and valley in the open air with the forest canopy all around them.

Access to this rooftop promenade is from two stairs near each pavilion entry, as well as a long gentle ramp that extends along the ridgeline and brackets the events green. This ramp creates an alternate trail route that leads over the building and traverses the swale at the location of the ancient ridgeline.





VIEW OF LOOKOUT FROM SWALE



VIEW OF SOUTH PAVILION



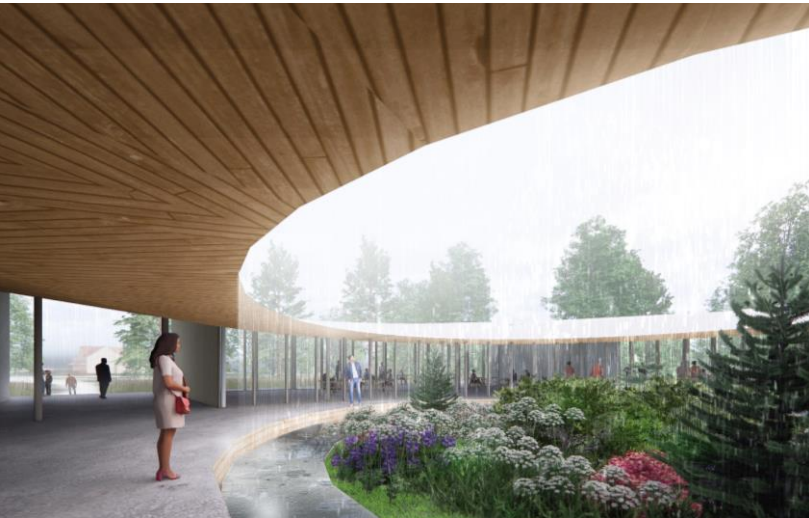
INTERIOR VIEW OF FOREST PASSAGE WALKWAY



VIEW OF ROOFTOP LOOKOUT

THANK YOU FOR REVIEWING THESE THREE DESIGN CONCEPTS.

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS! CLICK [HERE](#) TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ONLINE SURVEY.



SCHEME 1
SOLSTICE COURTYARD

Built around an open courtyard, this concept prioritizes connecting with nature with a focused experience at the heart of the building.



SCHEME 2
ROOFTOP DECK

This concept features a slanted building with a unique, green rooftop experience.



SCHEME 3
FOREST PASSAGE

In this concept, the visitor centre is nestled among the tree canopy, prioritizing a peaceful escape from the city and an intimate view to the Rouge Valley.