

Area of Reflection for John Dickinson Plantation



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Mission

This project will create an area of reflection for the visitors of John Dickinson Plantation to use, aiming to help them to better know the specific history and story happened in this plantation, and most importantly convey the idea of 'Everyone is Equal'.

Goals

Gather and Stay

Be able to be used as a gather space for the visitors, allowing people to gather, stay, learn and think.

Tell the Story

Illustrate the history correctly and clearly to the visitors. It tells the story of the slaved people in the past, showing the shape/image of their daily life to make visitors merge into the history.

Enable Reflection

Visitors are supposed to learn and realize how tragic and unfair the life of enslaved people was, and the design should convey the idea of Equal.

Objectives

Gather and Stay

- Provide multiple seats in the area of reflection for visitors
- Create shadow space by adding trees to block sunlight
- Connect to existing major trails to provide easy access
- Free circulation for visitors to wander around

Tell the Story

- Installing kiosk or information board which include the known name and story of enslaved people
- Provide clear sight for visitors to explore nearby environment
- Provide mini-exhibition, laying out the related artifacts for visitors

Enable Reflection

Make the design of this area of reflection have deeper educational function

- Utilize the existing contour
- Incorporate different materials
- Provide multiple sight to different direction (Main house / Work field / Farm land)

Precedent Study: Montpelier Museum

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James Madison's Montpelier

Site History

James Madison's Montpelier, located in Orange County, Virginia, was the plantation house of the Madison family, including fourth President of the United States, James Madison, and his wife Dolley. It is a property with a total area of 2,650-acre (10.7 km2).

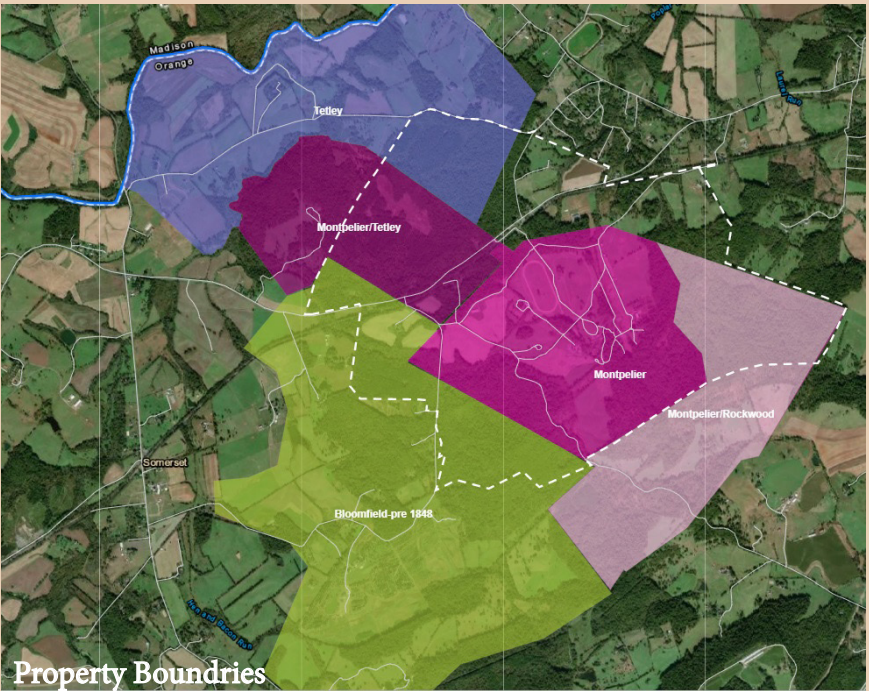


The work of Montpelier was done primarily by its about 100 enslaved African slaves during James Madison's tenure as owner. Slaves served in a variety of roles: field workers, domestic servants in charge of cleaning, cooking, and care of clothing; and as artisans for the mill, forge, wheelwright, and other carpentry and woodworking.

One Property. Many Plantations

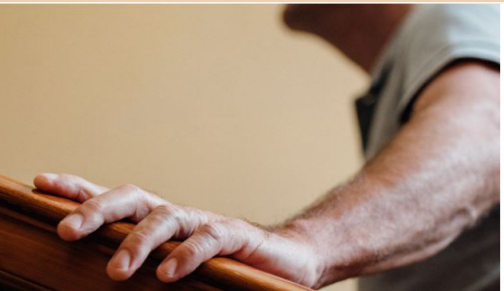
While visitors are aware that Montpelier is the plantation home of the Madison family and dozens of enslaved families, they are not cognizant that the present-day boundaries of Montpelier actually encompass five other plantations that date back to the 1820s and earlier.

For the enslaved Americans residing at Montpelier and at these various plantations, the proximity between plantations provided opportunities to expand their community and led to friendships and family ties.



Visitor Experience and Engagement

Several tour selections are offered to any visitors, scholars or students. They can pick the tour most cover their purpose of their visiting.



Private House Tours

Daily at 12:00 PM
Reservations must be made at least 24 hours in advance

The classic, keystone experience of Montpelier touches on a little bit of everything: James Madison and the Madison Family, The Constitution & Bill of Rights, Slavery and the Plantation.



Highlights of Montpelier Tour

Weekdays: 10 AM, 12 PM, 2 PM
Weekends: 10 AM, 11 AM, 12 PM, 1 PM, 2 PM

Guests will visit significant outdoor locations located in the historic core of the site, as well as three select rooms in the Madisons' home. *Reservations strongly encouraged*

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James Madison's Montpelier

Historic Preservation

Beginning in 2015, the department has actively been researching and reconstructing the South Yard, preserving various buildings across the site, and managing an architectural study collection of over 15,000 artifacts and documents.



Each piece helps tell a more full story of those who worked and lived in the South Yard while still educating the visitors about the reality of slavery.

Architectural Reconstruction



Making the Home Farm visible on the landscape is a critical step in helping visitors understand the scale and impact of plantation agriculture on the lives of plantation laborers.

Hidden Sites of Labor

For the past five years, the Montpelier Archaeology Department has been using metal detector surveys, LiDAR imagery, and deed research to uncover a early 19th century plantation complex in the East Woods. Prior to these studies, there was no knowledge this woodlot was a vital part of the Montpelier landscape. By engaging in a multi-disciplinary research approach they have begun to uncover this hidden landscape.

It is significant to uncover the hidden sites like this because valuable information or evidence could be buried there and they could tell us many stories we did not notice and know.



Surface Design Operation (STO)

Research Brief

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Deconstruction/ Reconstruction (D/R)

- Reuse materials on site
- Transform imperviousness
- Address material energy footprint
- Establish vegetation (and root systems) through the surface
- Preserve site memory



Urban Outfitters Headquarters,
Philadelphia

Geologic Matters (GM)

- Respond to the geological origins of the site and region
- Reveal and express geology as cultural or memory device
- Promote ecological aspects of geological relationships
- Employ soil materials derived from local geology for increased site performance
- Recolonize sites through soil property-specific planting approach



Novartis Green
Novartis Campus
Basel, Switzerland

Hybrid-Modularity (H-M)

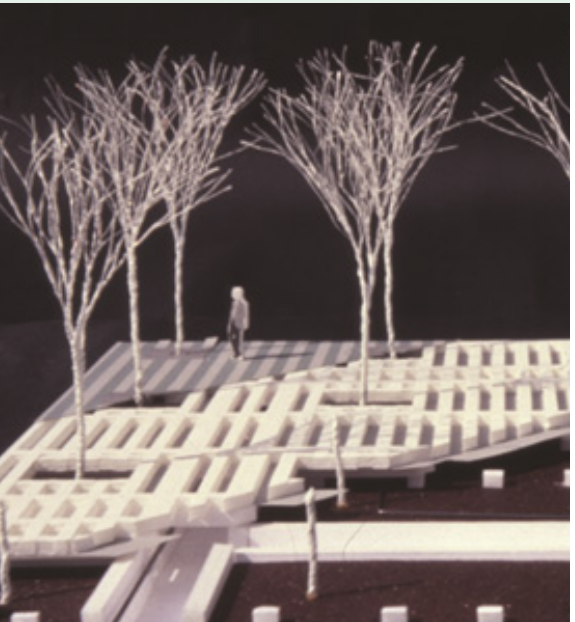
- Provide varying surface configurations and performance across site
- Provide hydrologic nterception while providing structural load
- Address varying site requirements with a unified material strategy



High Line, NYC

Constructed-Layered Ground (C-L)

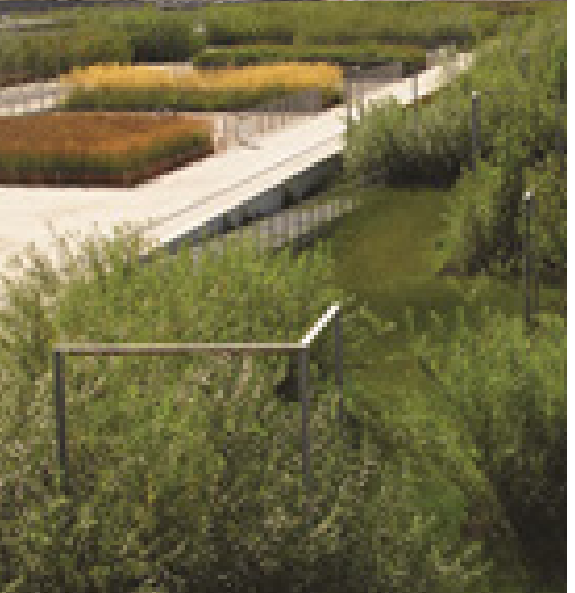
- Create thick urban ecosystems in constructed layers
- Promote infiltration, biomass, and carbon sequestration in soil layer design
- Construct landscapes in highly infrastructural settings



Saitama Plaza, Tokyo

Transitional/ Anticipatory (T/A)

- Reoccupy residual, abandoned, and vacant spaces
- Catalyze ecological processes
- Signal new uses and life processes within sites
- Provide soil remediation and/or soil building processes (mechanical and chemical)
- Increase landscape productivity



Seguin Island Gardens,
Boulogne-Billancourt, France

Surface Design Operation (STO)

Research Brief

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In the centre of the Novartis campus, in front of the Gehry building, one can find the Green: a hybrid of square and park that has been designed as an entree for the surrounding buildings and meeting place for persons from the entire campus.

The design is based on a clearly defined brief and context: surrounded by representative buildings and undermined by a subterranean auditorium, the Green is expected to keep the views clear. In addition, a soil of maximum 70 cm does not allow for large trees or undulating terrain.

Brief and Context

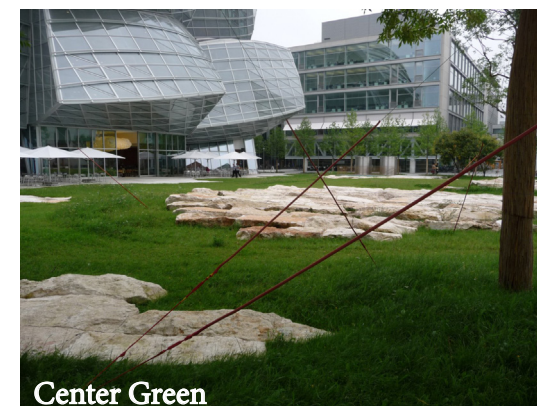
Name: Novartis Green

STO: Geologic Matter

Period: 2006-2010

Surface Area: 6000 m²

Country: Switzerland



The exterior design of the Green abstracts the distinctive elements of the karst landscape and reinterprets them in the context and the dimensions of the urban environment.

Silberen, the most famous karst landscape of Switzerland has been the basis for this adaption that creates a representative, abstract free space: green in its centre, light-colored on its brinks.

GM (Geologic Matter) STO provides an opportunity to preserve geological origins of the site and show people the site's geological history.

Site Analysis: John Dickinson Plantation

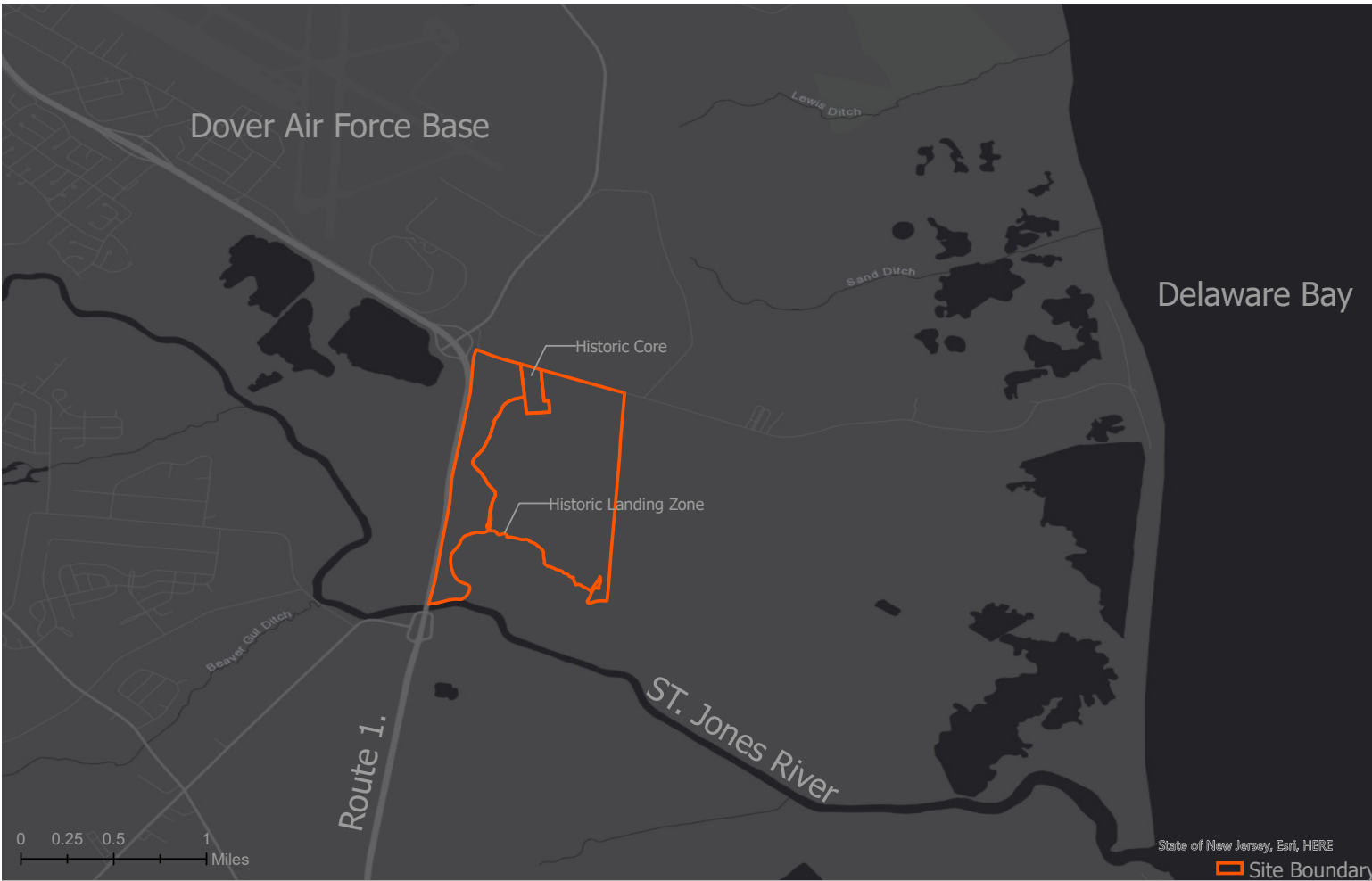
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340 Kitts Hummock Rd, Dover, DE 19901

Home of John Dickinson, one of the founding fathers of the United States, signer of the Constitution and “Penman of the Revolution.”

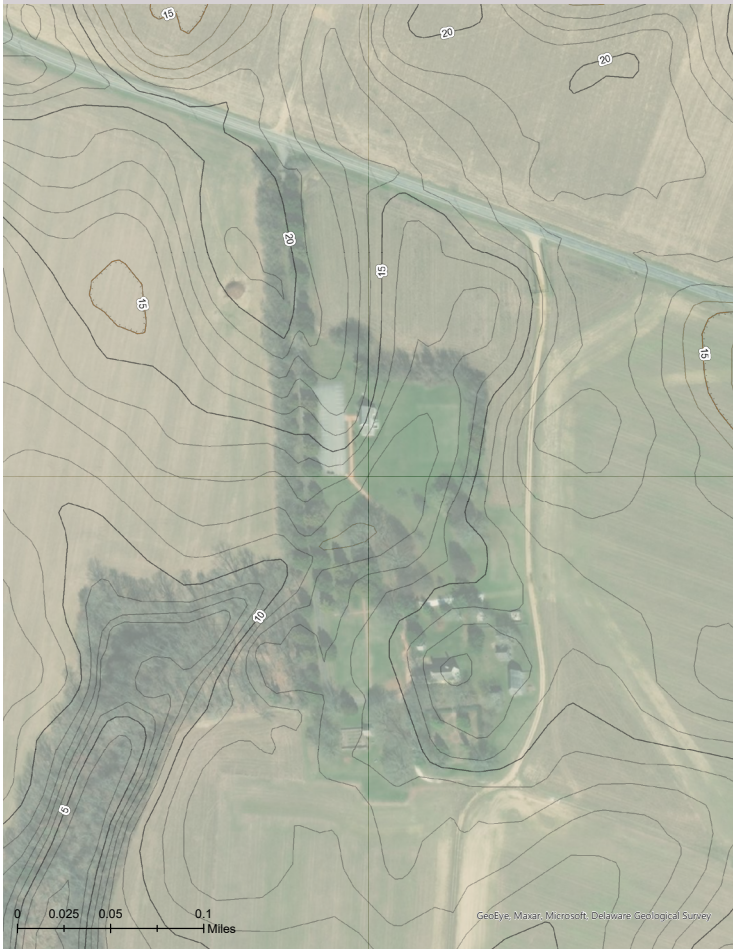


The Plantation features Dickinson’s original 1740 brick home, reconstructed farm buildings and dwelling, surrounded by rich agricultural lands stretching down to the banks of the St. Jones River. The plantation is also home of at least 60 enslaved people. The site boundary has been marked by red.



Site Location

Topography in Different Scales



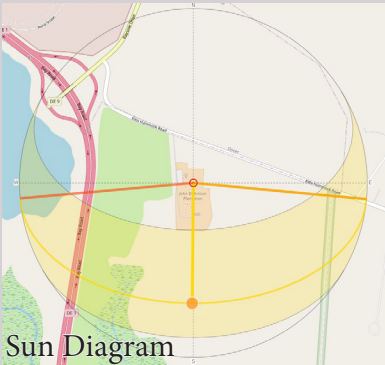
Contour Map



Contour Map 2

Sun Condition

Since the site is located on a relatively flat terrain with fair amounts of lawn and farmland and there are not many structures, the shady area on site is mostly around trees and woods area.



Sun Diagram

Site Analysis: John Dickinson Plantation

340 Kitts Hummock Rd, Dover, DE 19901

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Site Photos and Labels: Historic Core



Main Entrance



Space next to Visitor Center



Space next to Parking Lot



West Woods



West Farm Land



Main House



Garden



Log Cabins



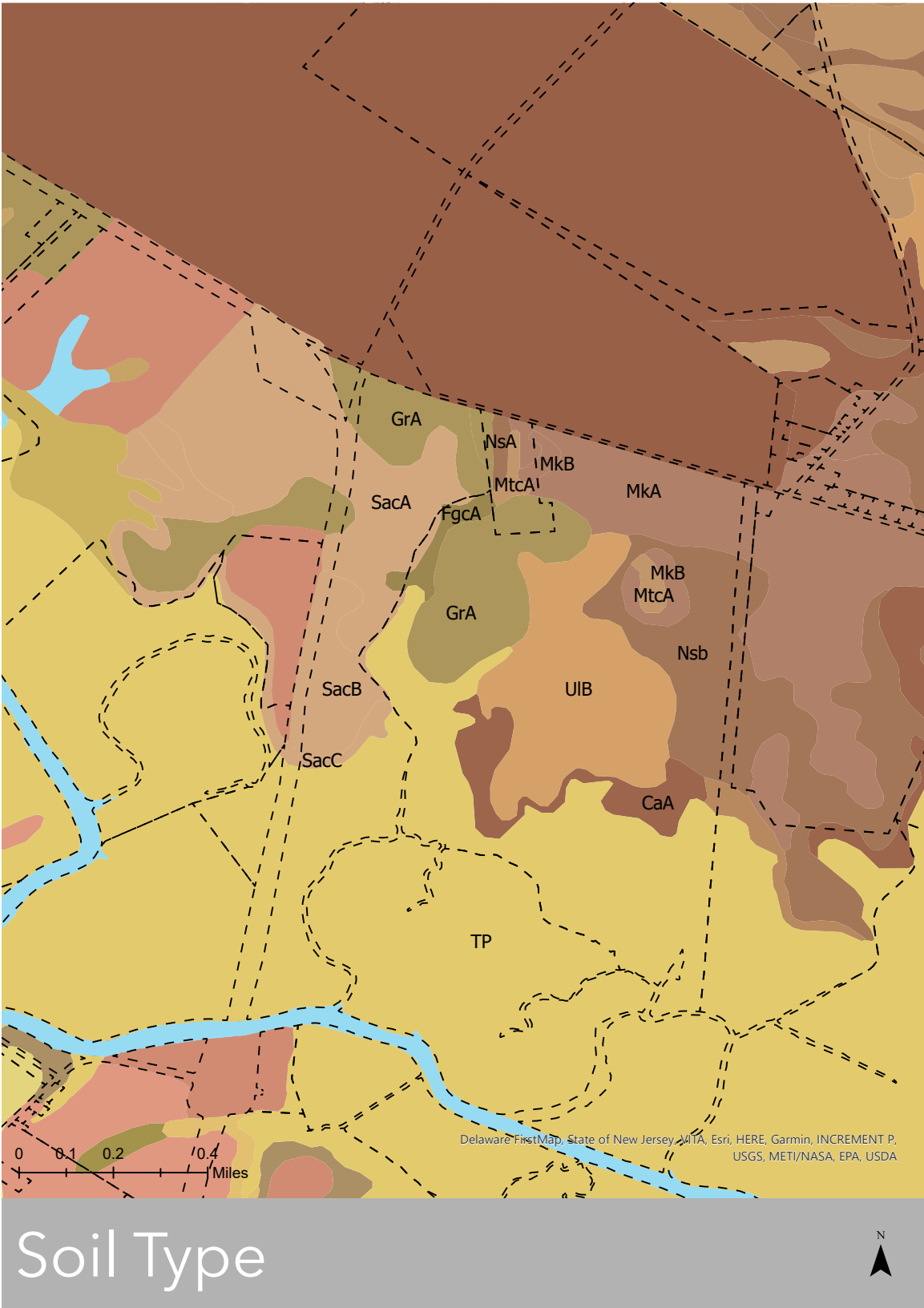
South Farm Land



Site Analysis: John Dickinson Plantation

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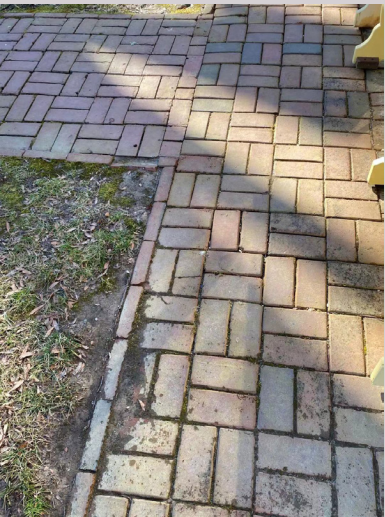
Materials on Site



Main House Brick



Cabin Wood



Brick Pavement



Cement

Others

- Wooden Stairs
- Smoke House
- Unpaved Entrance



Soil Feature Key

SacA: Sandy loam; Well Drained
SacB: Sandy loam; Well Drained
SacC: Sandy loam; Well Drained
MkA: Silt loam; Well Drained
MkB: Silt loam; Well Drained
MtcA: Silt loam
FgcA: Loam

GrA: Loam; Well drained
NsA: Silt loam; Well Drained
CaA: Loam; Poorly Drained
NsB: Silt loam; Well Drained
UIB: Loam; Well Drained
TP: Transquaking and Mispillion soils; Very Poorly Drained

Diagram

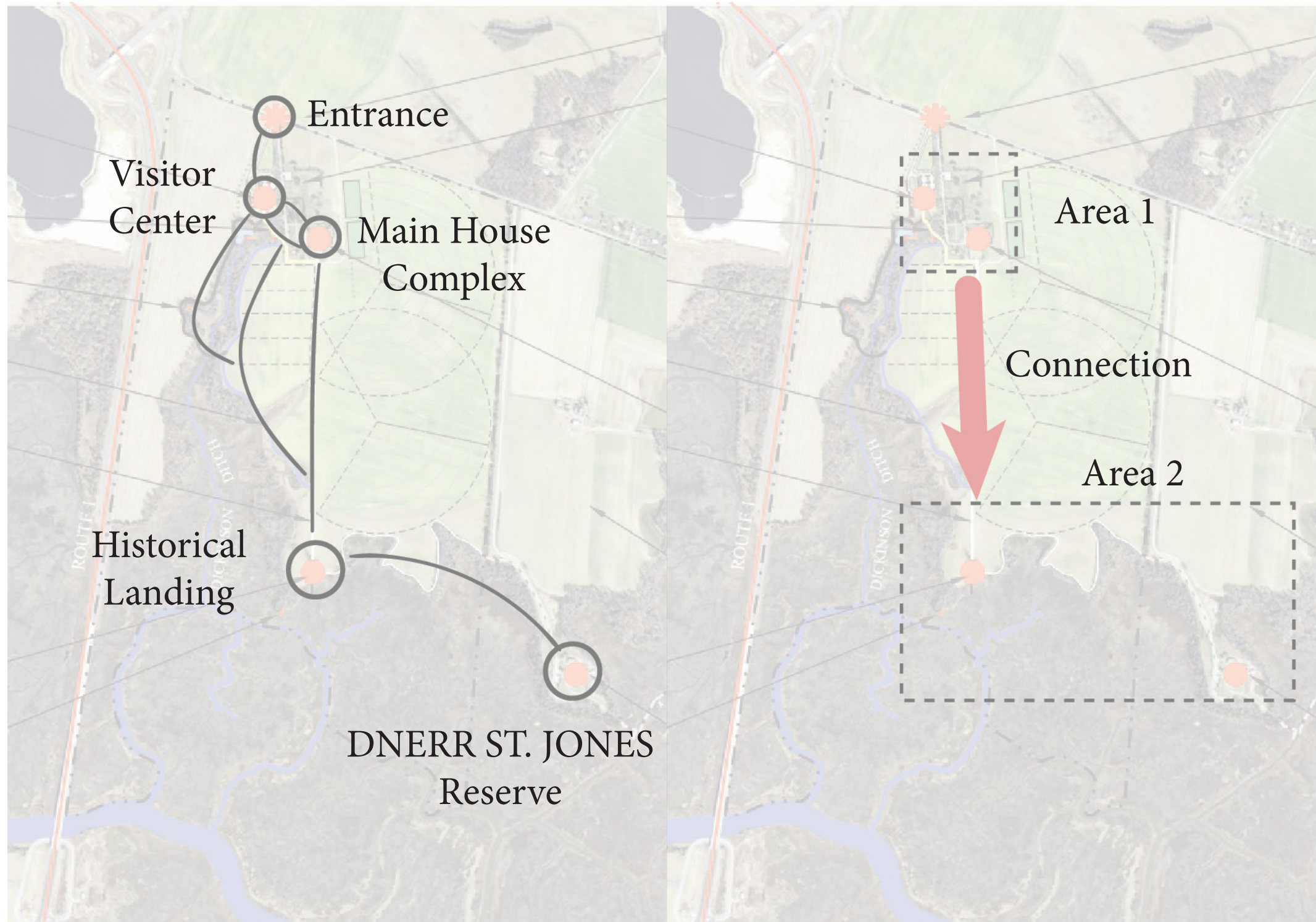


Diagram on the left:

Show major sections on site and the existing circulation pattern that connects all of the major sections where people are most likely to visit and explore.

Diagram on the right:

Identify the problem: Generally, the major connection between two areas on site is a long straight path go through the vast farmland, which could be boring to use.

Decision Maker

These two diagrams serve as decision maker that helps to decide the location of the area of reflection.

The area of reflection should be located somewhere:

- Close to the main house located in Area 1
- Next to the major connection between Area 1 and Area 2 to make this long straight path more attractive and interesting

Geologic Matter: Topography

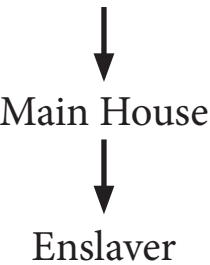


Contour Map

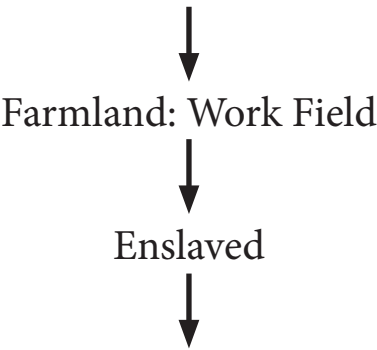
Area of Reflection & Main House

The topography brings an interesting opportunity to enable the reflection of hierarchy concept. The main house is at high point while the area of reflection is at low point, a metaphor is created here.

High Point (18ft)

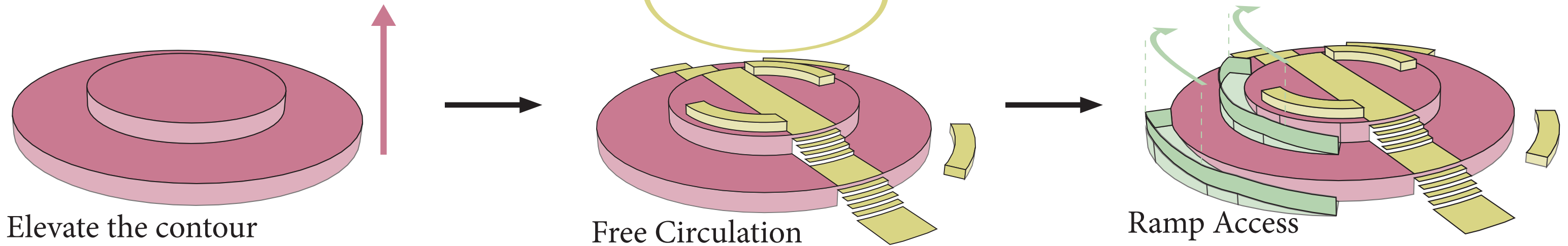


Low Point (10-12ft)



Area of Reflection

Design Concept and Plan



Design Concept

Elevated platform structure represent the hierarchy concept.

- Top Level
- Medium Level
- Ground Level

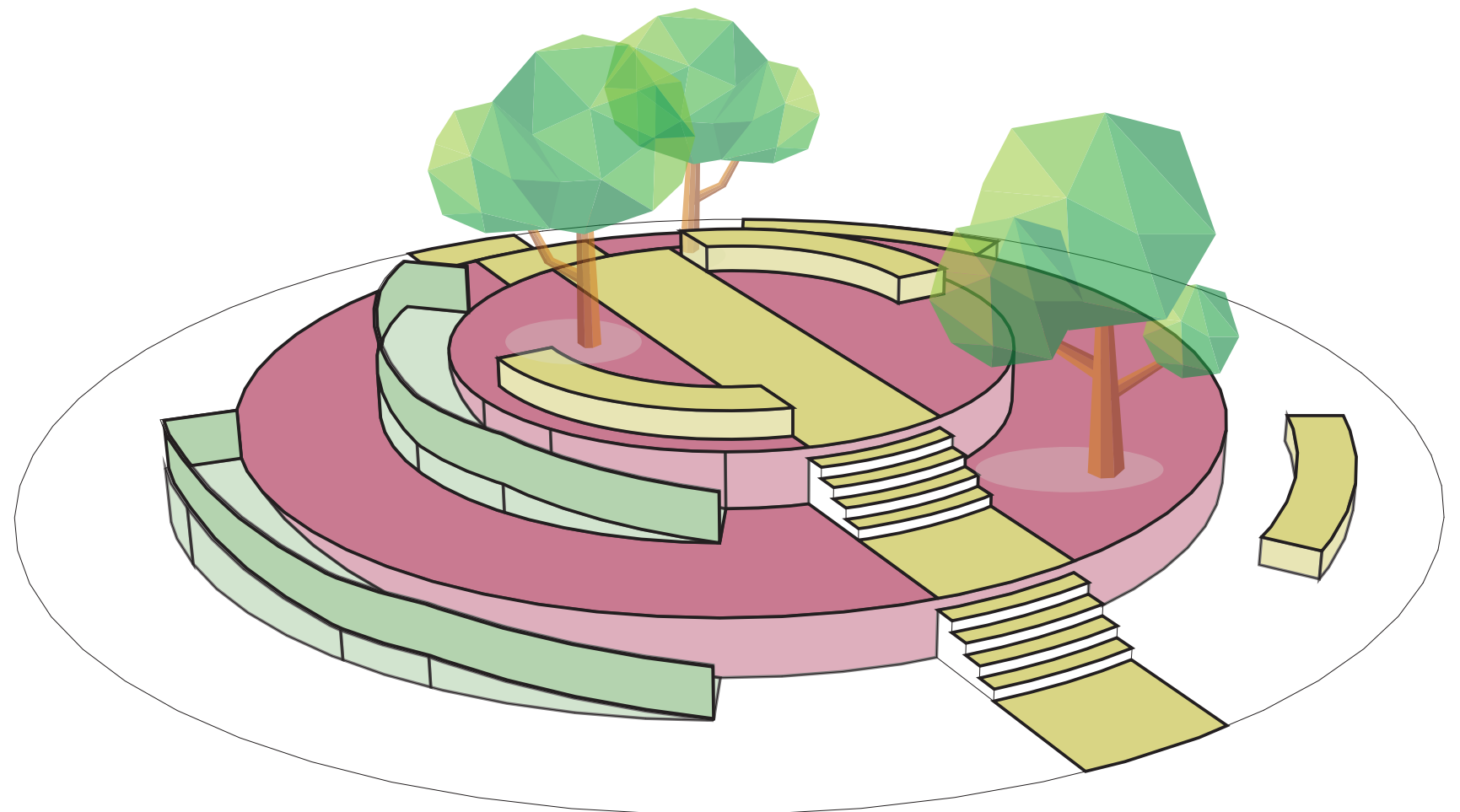
Bring people to the same level as the main house when standing at top level.

Incorporate different materials to represent different hierarchy level.

- Wood can represent the enslaved
- Brick can represent the enslaver

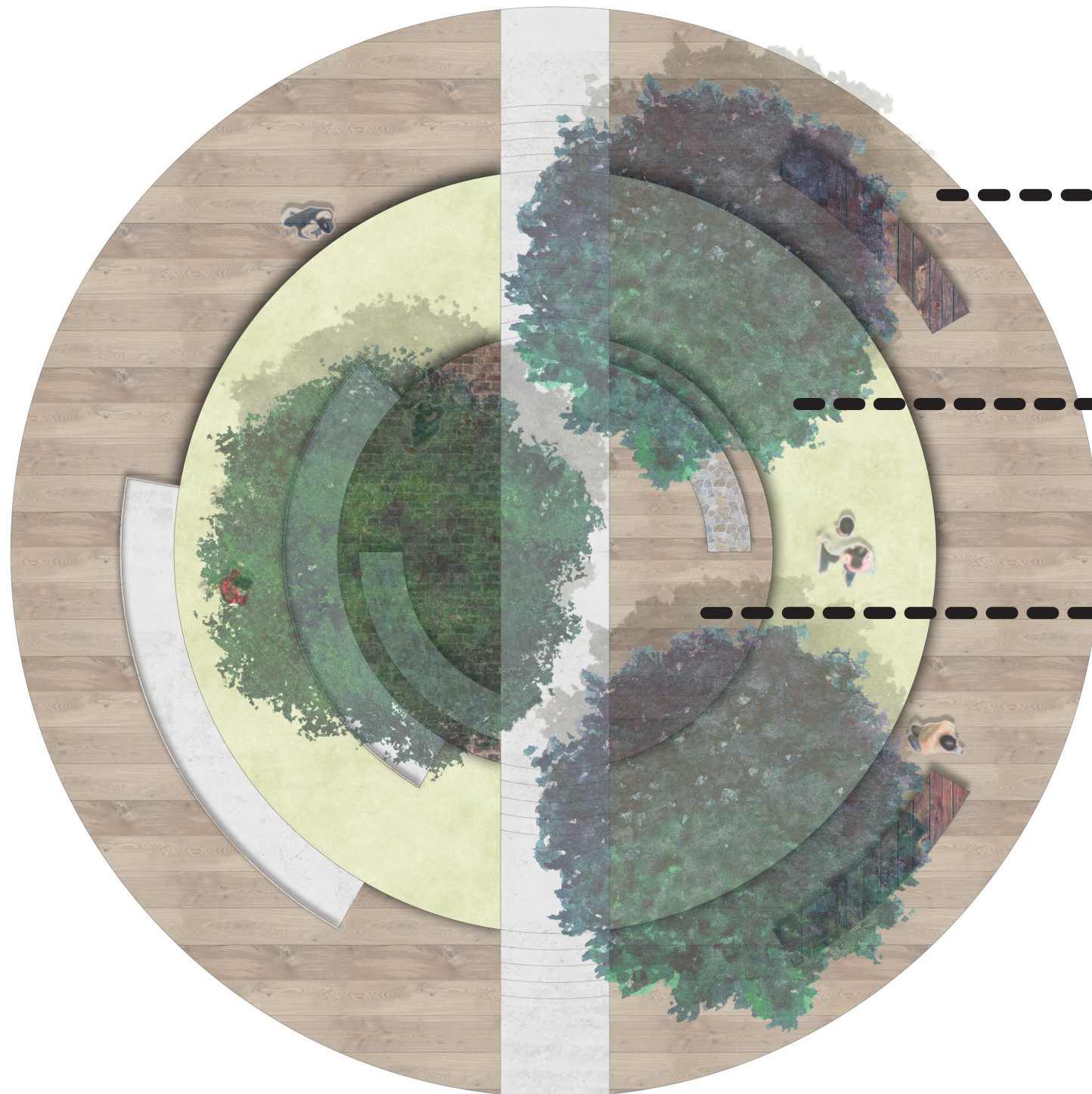
Assign those materials to different structure level

- Ground level --- Wood --- Low hierarchy
- Middle level --- Grass / Lawn --- Intermediate hierarchy
- Top level --- Brick --- High hierarchy



Design Concept and Plan

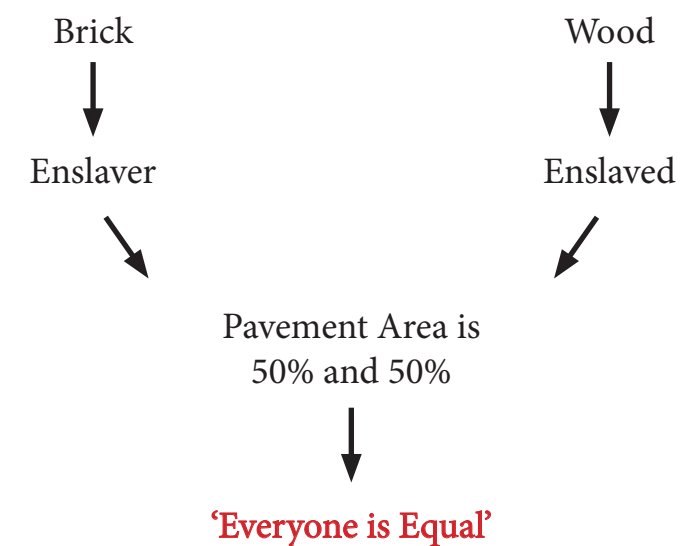
- Why Top Level is Mixed?
- All bricks represents only the old hierarchy condition
- Use mixed pavement to represent people should be all equal nowadays



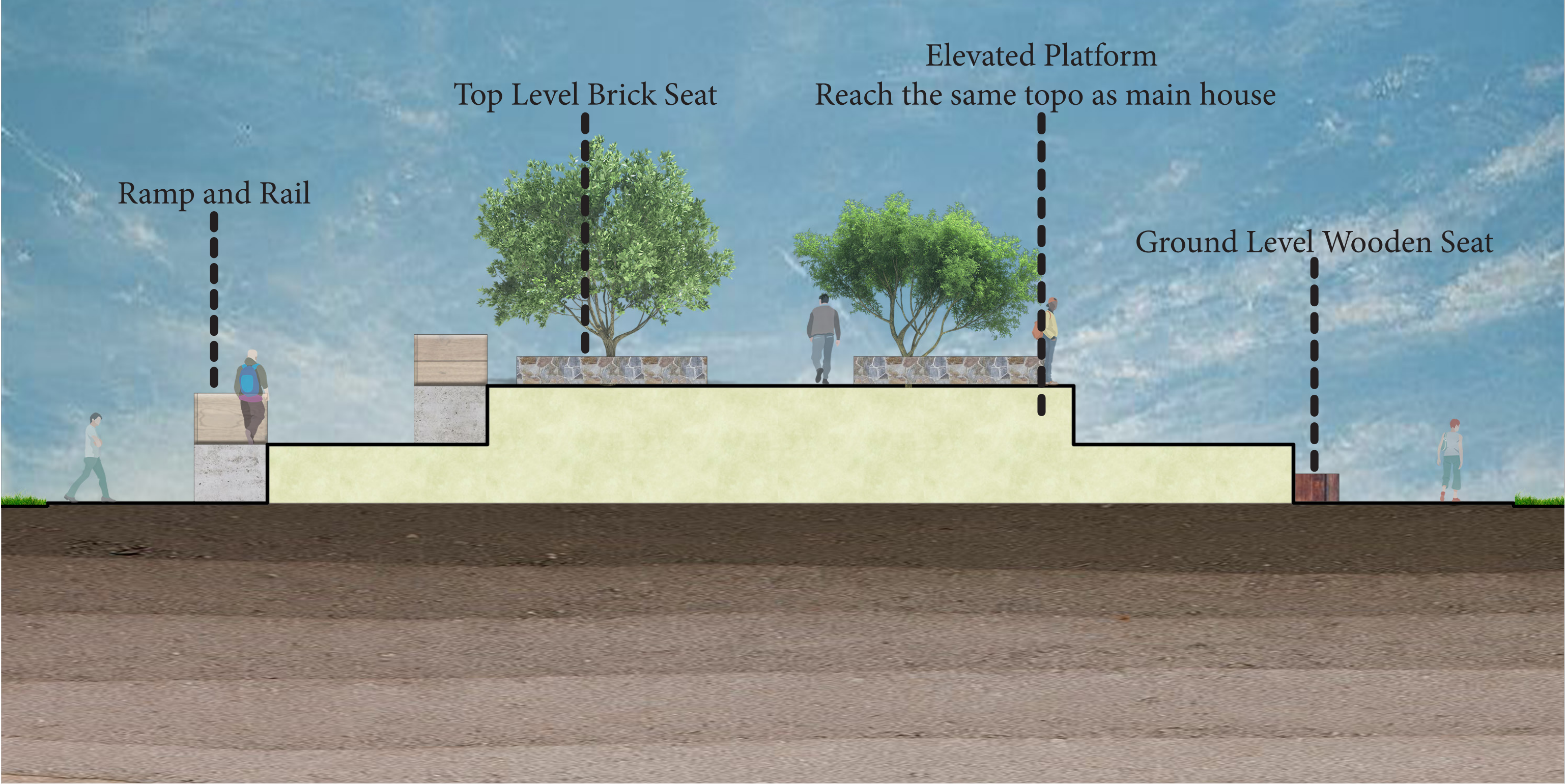
Ground Level: Wood Pavement

Middle Level: Grass

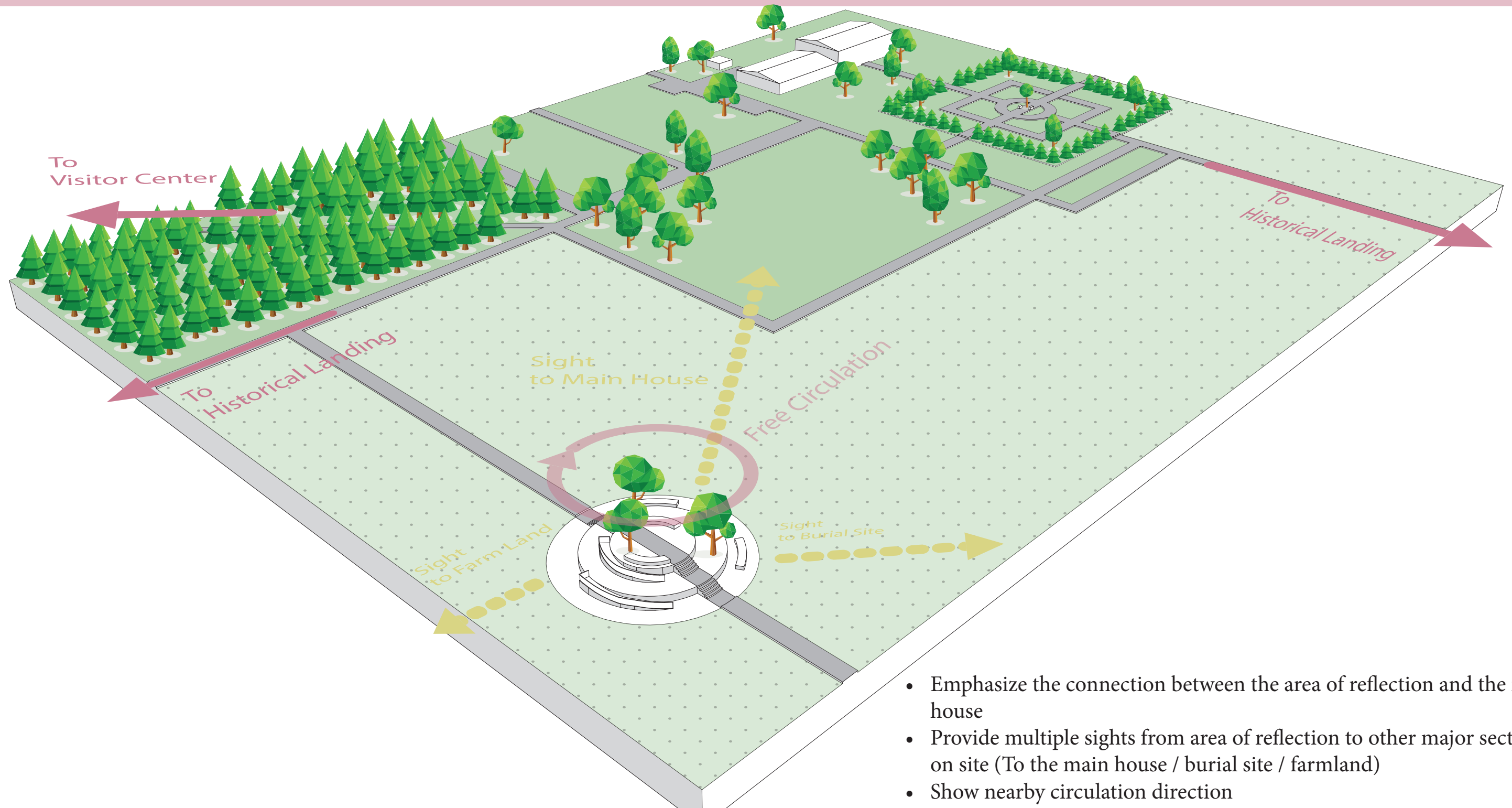
Top Level: Mixed Pavement



Section



Bird View Plan



- Emphasize the connection between the area of reflection and the main house
- Provide multiple sights from area of reflection to other major sections on site (To the main house / burial site / farmland)
- Show nearby circulation direction

Perspective



Model



Model



Model

