

# *Linear Park Townhouse Landscape Design*

## **Jemima Aland**

My brief comprised of designing and landscaping a small residential development on Linear Park and displaying the finished product as a floor plan, garden landscape, scale model, and life-sized cushions. I have a fascination for architecture, landscaping and interior design and plan to build my career around these interests. I wanted to design my own exterior space. My family recently purchased an investment property along Linear Park. I thought it would be perfect to redesign the garden to make it more inviting, functional, and a space that encourages interaction between individuals and nature. I decided that using a real-life situation would make the design process more inspiring and workable. I wanted the design of my garden landscape to blend with the Linear Park surrounds. Thus, the landscape would involve a design that connects with the surrounds by incorporating Australian native plants, contrasting textures and colour, water features, open and enclosed spaces, and pathways to encourage movement within the space.

In the design of my landscape, I was enthused by the concept of Forest Bathing. This concept involves creating a space that allows people to connect with nature and therefore, 'forest bathe'. This concept appealed to me because it related to positive and aesthetically pleasing experiences. Applying the principles of Forest Bathing included creating and designing spaces like several private seating spaces to invite individuals to relax, de-stress, and connect with nature. It also influenced my decisions on where to position plants and trees within my landscape. I discovered that promoting Forest Bathing within my landscape was crucial. Linear Park is home to many plant, bird and insect species. It provides a range of settings for people to rest, walk, ride and revel in natural surroundings. Correspondingly, I wanted my landscape to connect with the attractions of Linear Park, thus the concept of Forest Bathing was a helpful influence. Further, it seemed logical to research the plants within the Linear Park area and include a selection of these varieties in my landscape. This narrowed down the options which made the decisions for plant selection for my garden landscape easier. Placing identical plants in the garden would connect the spaces together and encourage native wildlife, such as birds and insects to use the space.

Various practitioners and philosophies influenced my decisions on the layout and design of my garden landscape. David Baptiste, a local landscape designer in Adelaide was an inspiration behind some of the aesthetics in my garden, as well as the practicality of its design layout. I took note of the way Baptiste was attuned to the variable nature of Adelaide climate and his deep green, abundant, soft and inviting garden landscapes. I was particularly inspired by the way Baptiste provided privacy within his garden landscapes through the placement of shrubbery. This influenced the positioning of the two private seating spaces within my garden, both in close proximity to vegetation. Caroline Dawes and Henrietta Wighton also opened my thinking to new ideas. Both designers use a variety of textures and a number of plant species within their garden landscapes. Through observing the designs of these artists, I realised the importance of contrast within a garden space. I employed this method when designing my landscape. Additionally, I was drawn to the Japanese garden design approach, Tsubo Niwa. Its small-enclosed courtyards with beautiful water features, tranquil atmosphere and greenery greatly influenced my decisions to segment my garden landscape into sheltered and private areas. Furthermore, the minimalistic and rustic designs of Wabi Sabi helped me understand the importance of engaging with the beauty of nature. This concept allowed me to create a space that adopted a minimalist approach and one that connected with nature. I achieved this by placing the seating areas, pathway, and pool in close proximity with the vegetation.

Throughout the design of my landscape, I was motivated by my personal aesthetic of comfort. Creating a garden space that was welcoming, appealing, and comfortable for individuals was a priority. I love to walk along Linear Park and absorb the natural surrounds. I find listening to a bird song, observing nature, and spotting wildlife a pleasant and relaxing experience. These walks take me on explorative journeys. I wanted my garden to offer the same experience, albeit on a smaller scale. This is evident in my garden landscape in the zigzag pathway, which invites individuals to go on small adventures as they walk. Several seating spaces welcome people to sit, listen, watch and think as they interact within the space. To make the area comfortable, I added cushions to the seating places. Accordingly, I chose to design and produce two cushions for my private seating spaces as part of my practical. The creation of the cushions accentuates my personal aesthetic of comfort.

Whilst designing my garden landscape I was able to learn about the importance of 'knowing the space' and becoming familiar with the Linear Park surroundings. Prior to designing my landscape, I had a limited understanding of the factors that made this part of Adelaide so appealing. Creating and linking nature's themes was an important factor of the design process. I was exposed to various shapes, textures and colours throughout my research. I learnt how to combine these elements within each space, successfully mixing them to provide a balance of contrast. I learnt how to use Photoshop to create my final floor plan and how to apply several effects to the image. Some Photoshop processes were discovered through "trial and error", while expert advice was required for others.

Following the process from the initial brief to the final product has allowed me to appreciate the importance of planning and developing. My complete solution of the scale model, floor plan and cushions came from experimentation and refinement of the layout. Overall, I am extremely pleased with my final piece. My personal growth in skills and knowledge over a range of techniques, as well as my personal aesthetic of comfort, shaped the design of the Linear Park Garden Landscape and the features incorporated within.