



Path systems and hierarchies

Path design not only involves the creation of individual paths but path systems or networks. Consideration must often be given to hierarchical arrangements in which intensively-used paths are designed and linked in different ways to those used occasionally. Different paths will have different functional purposes; some for direct access, others for slower meandering exploration of the landscape. The design of path systems involves the organisation of relationships of these different types of paths.

Networks, nodes and foci

When paths are formed into networks, junctions become important stopping, meeting and waiting locations. These nodes (Lynch 1960) therefore need design consideration to accommodate the activities that naturally occur where paths meet. Nodes often need to be designed as small spaces in their own right

Path network designs also respond to and integrate with foci (which are often located at nodes). As visual and symbolic attractors in the landscape, foci (see the section on Foci, p. 147) have a very important relationship with paths as endpoints to journeys or as incidents in a sequence.