

INTRODUCTION TO LADAKH AND DRUK WHITE LOTUS SCHOOL



Location map of Ladakh

LOCATION

- Situated in the Himalayas, Ladakh is bordered by Pakistan and China and considered an area of Strategic interest; it is heavily militarised.
- Opened to the Western world in 1976 for the first time, it was an untouched paradise.
- Ladakh has a climate of extremes with winter temperatures often reaching as low as -30C and summers as high as +30C.
- It is classed as a ‘High Altitude desert’, with minimal precipitation.
- There are only two passes in and out of the region and these are closed for the winter months due to snow on the high passes.
- Leh, the capital was located on the Silk Route and was a historical centre for trade.



CULTURE

- Ladakh is a 2000 year old kingdom where Buddhism is the dominant religion, often referred to as ‘Little Tibet’.
- People have practised traditional subsistence agriculture for centuries and prospered despite the adverse conditions.
- A social structure based on mutual cooperation, reciprocity and social cohesion combined with an intimate working connection with their landscape, gave rise to a prosperous and happy society.
- Living in a harmonious balance with their environment, the Ladakhis never exceeded the carrying capacity of the land. There was no concept of waste or pollution, everything had a purpose and place.



Panorama of school campus



2001 School Inauguration

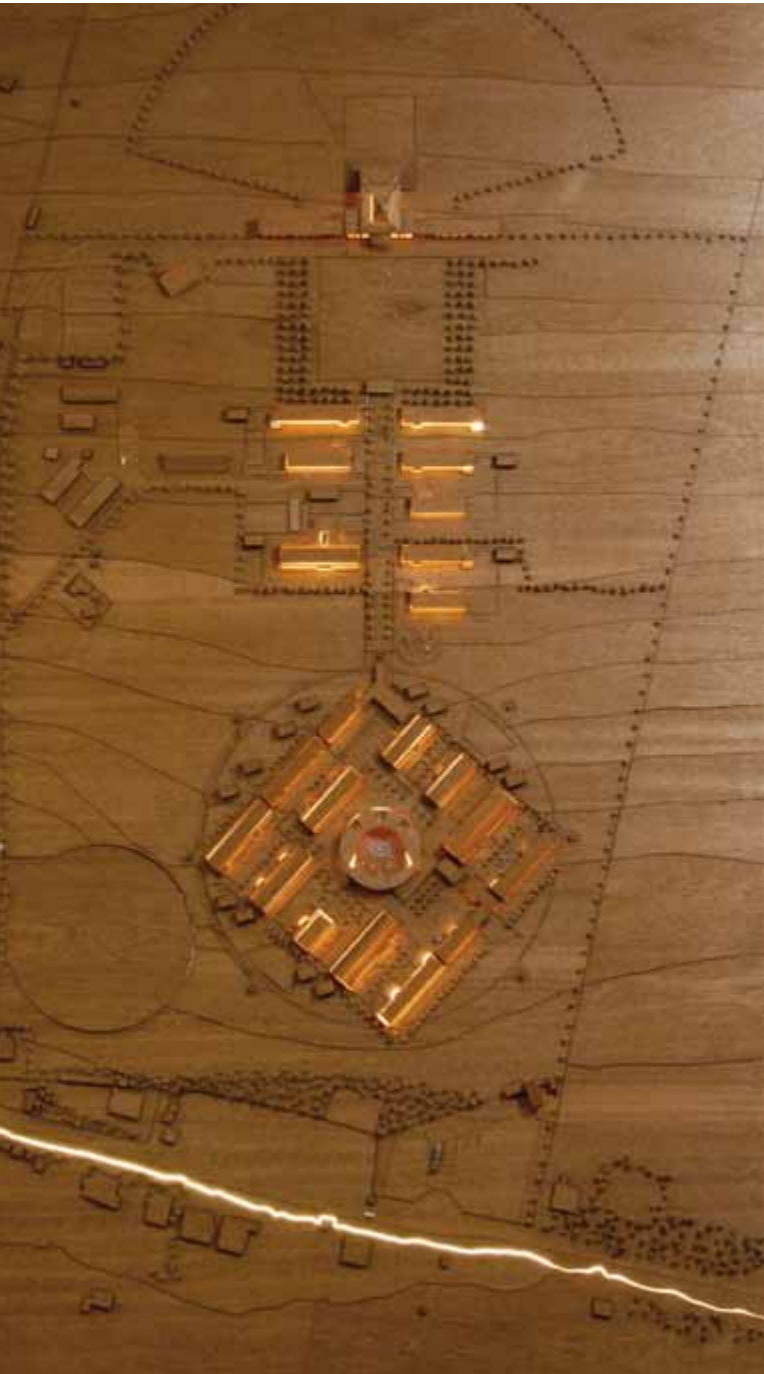
2010 Mudslide devastation

DRUK WHITE LOTUS SCHOOL

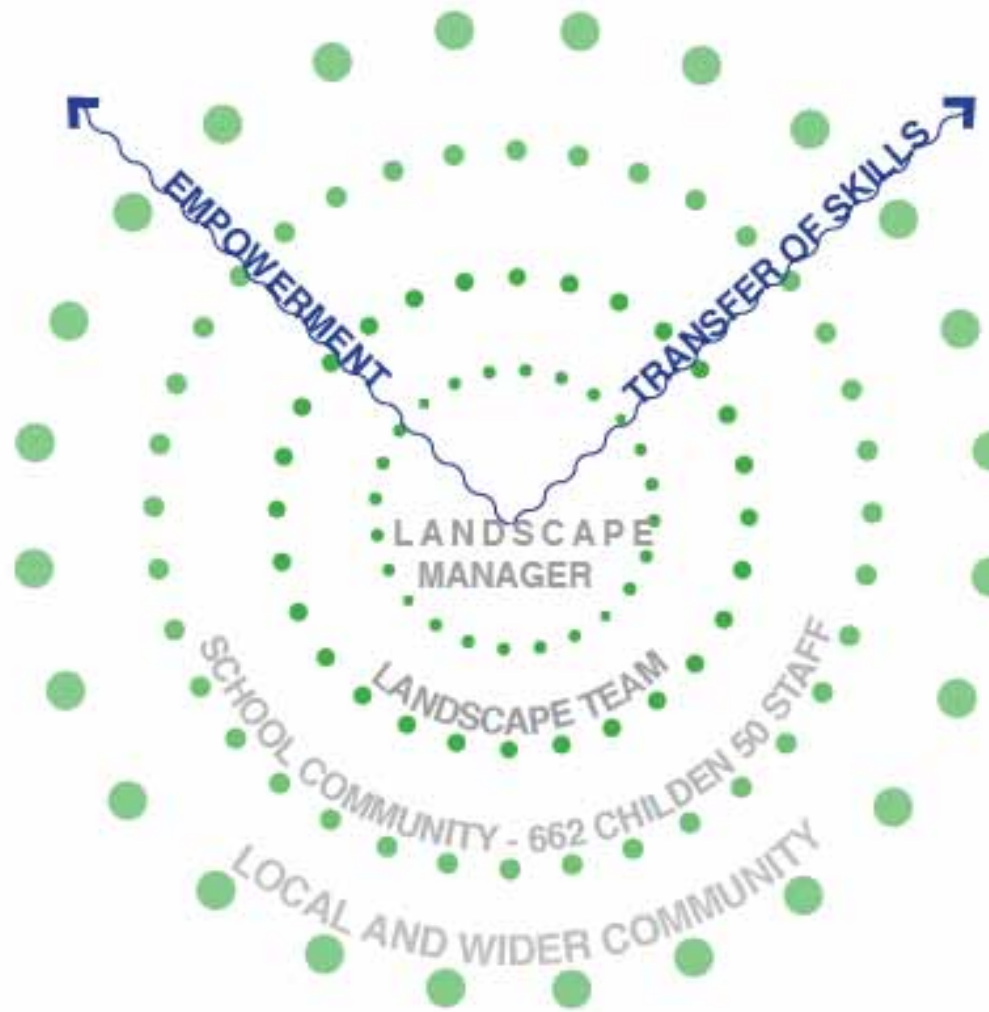
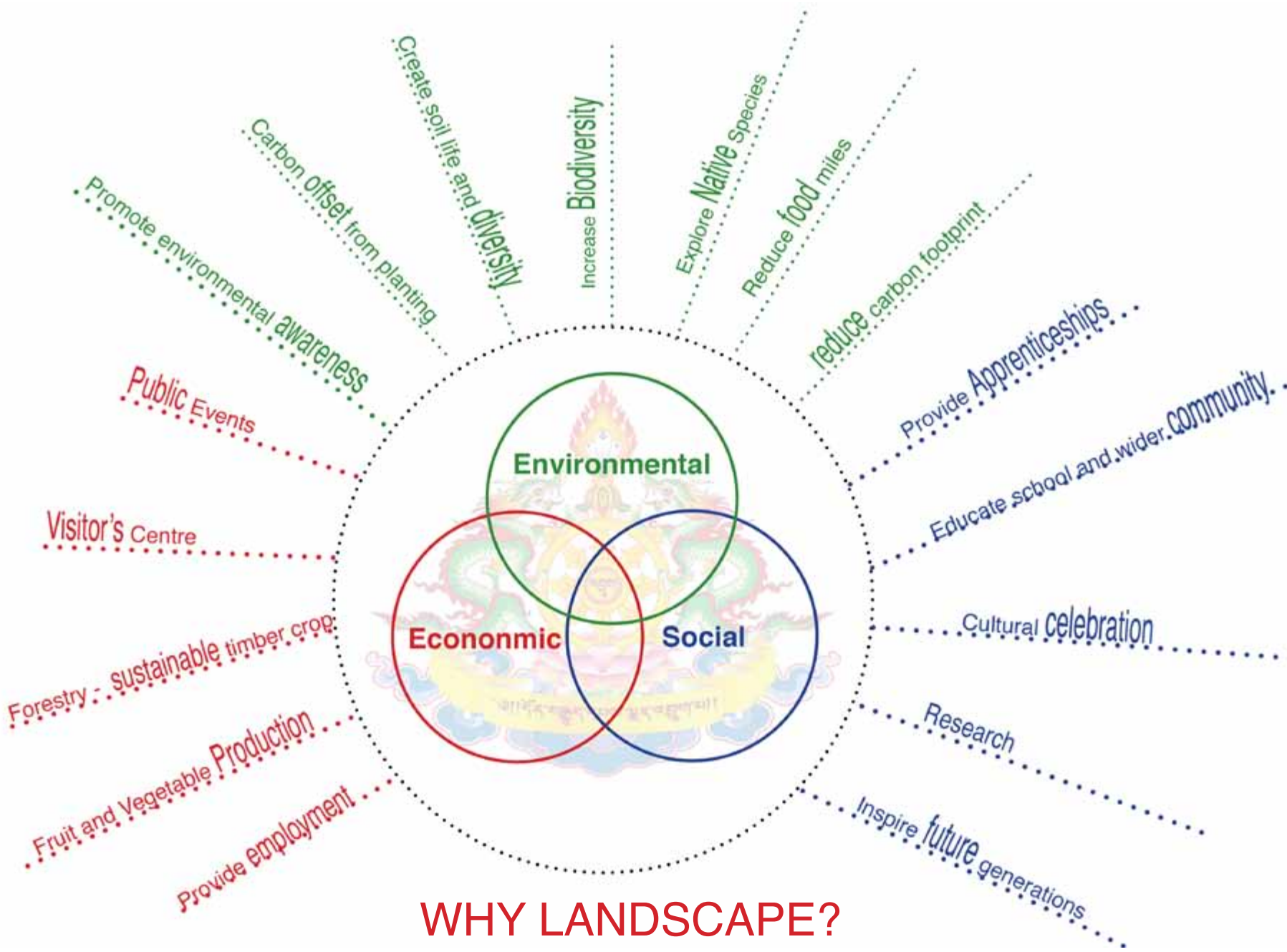
- Founded by His Holiness The Gyalwang Drukpa with a vision to provide a modern education to children from the very remote areas of Ladakh.
- Funds raised by the Drukpa Trust has enabled the construction of the school, there are 662 students there today, approximately half are residential.
- Designed by ARUP Associates, the school has won numerous awards for sustainable architecture.
- A mudslide in 2010 caused by a freak cloudburst caused unprecedented damage to the school, no-one was hurt.
- 2012 saw the beginning of an exchange program with Landscape Architects from the UK working on site to deliver a landscape strategy.



His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa



Architectural Masterplan



IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE MANAGER



DESIGN AND STRATEGY

LANDSCAPE VISION

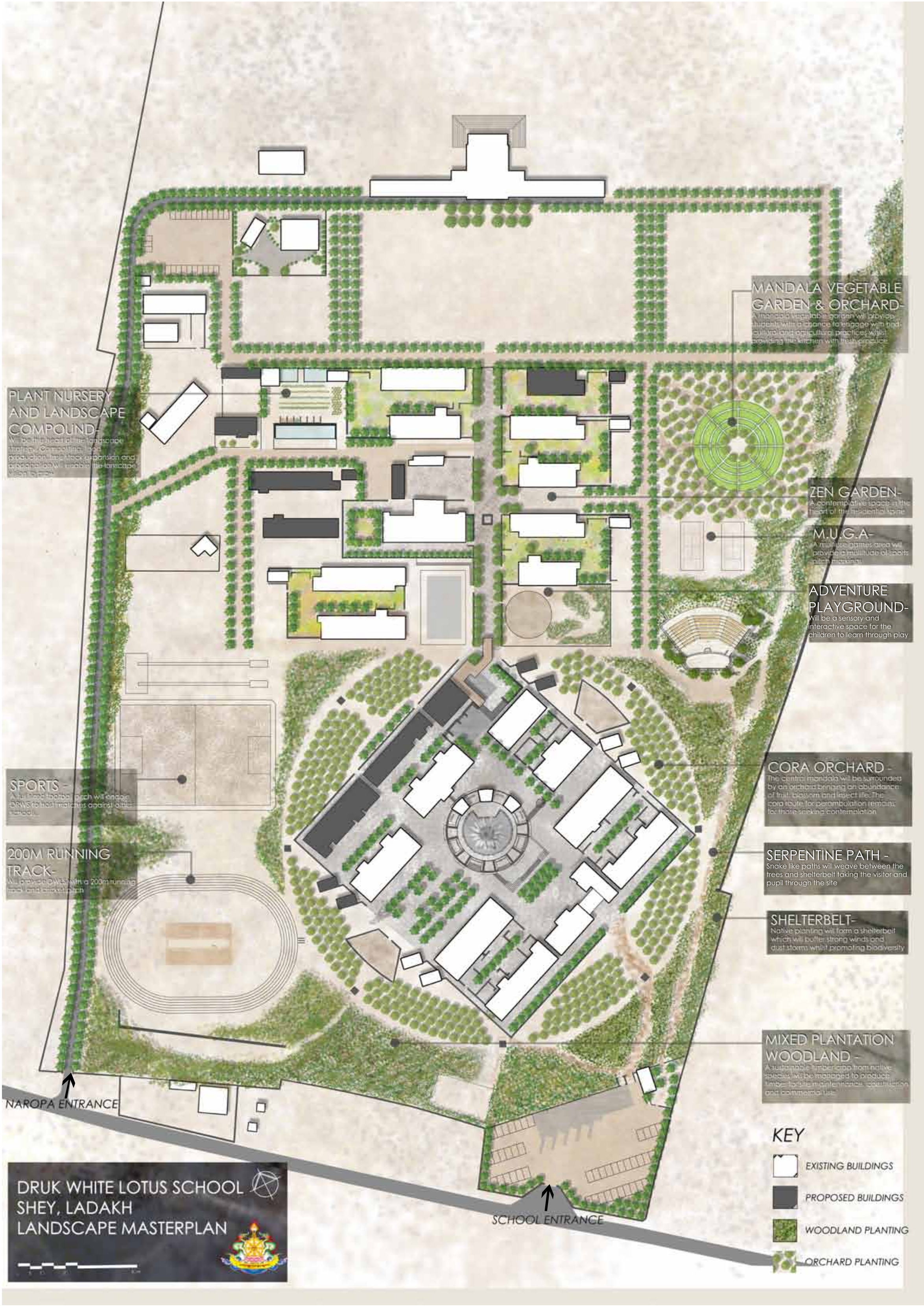
“To create a unique living and learning environment through a productive and sustainable landscape, resilient in the face of climate change and a model for landscape and education in Ladakh.”

Landscape at the Druk White Lotus School looks to the past for inspiration and the present for innovation in order to build a strong and resilient future.



Visualisation of Mandala Vegetable Garden

LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN



Adventure Playground

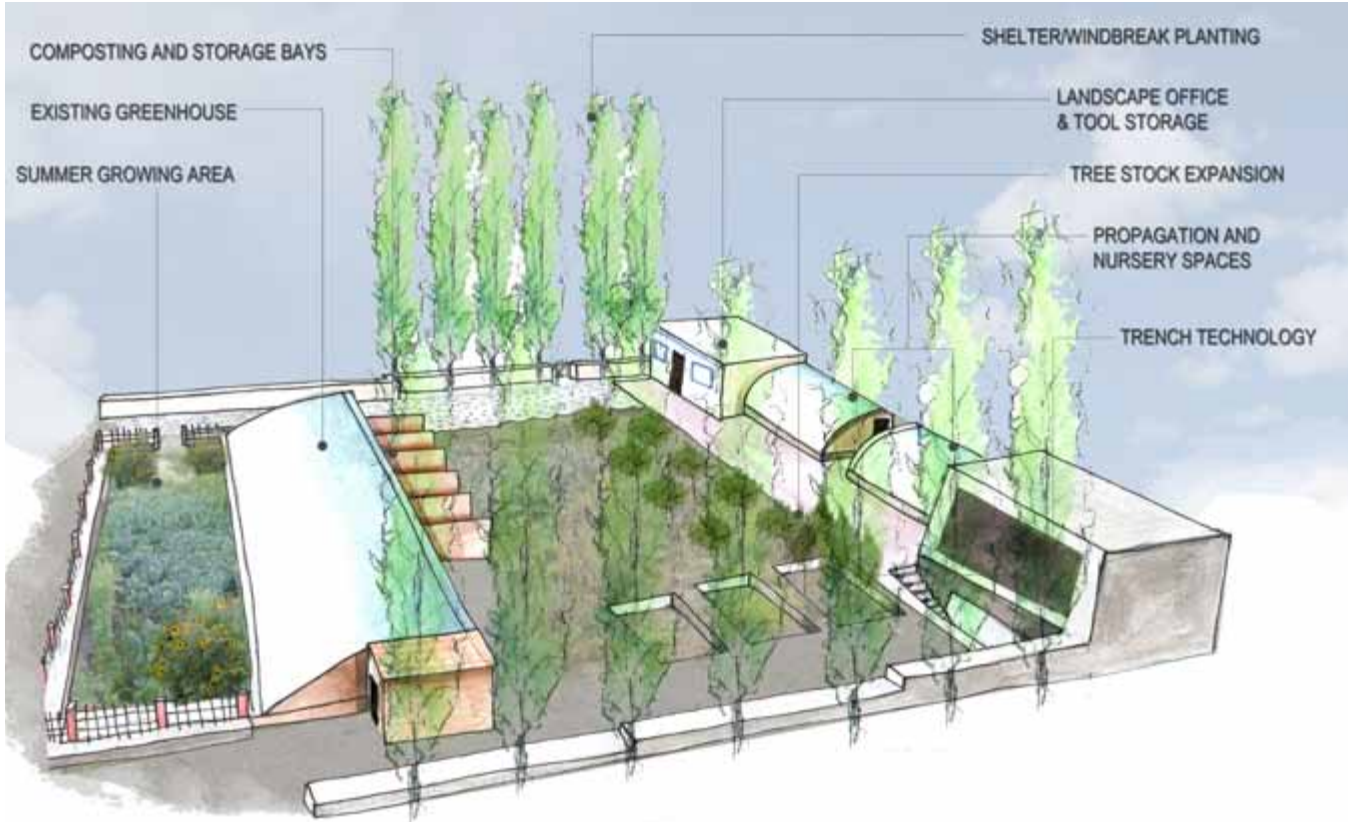


Visualistaion of shelterbelt planting and shaded paths

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- 1. Expand plant stock using native and non-native species.
- 2. Plant throughout the site to increase biomass, produce food and create favourable microclimate.
- 3. Make use of all available resources on site to begin process of soil creation and improvement.
- 4. Irrigate the planting with micro-irrigation drip system, fed from a dynamic ground source aquifer, recharged by snow melt.

Initiated through the landscape compound, plant nursery and Landscape Team



2013 ACHIEVEMENTS



Spring 2013 work begins in Plant Nursery



Spring 2013 work begins in Plant Nursery



Late Spring 2013 beginning to take shape



Mid Summer 2013 - looking good

PLANT NURSERY

- Established over 500 Fruit trees, native and non-native.
- Constructed an additional 2 greenhouses for propagation.
- Created trench technology for seedlings.
- Produced organic vegetables.
- Began composting and soil creation.
- Built an office, kitchen, store and potting shed.
- Experimented with paving techniques.



Agricultural field trips



Hands on help



Organic produce

SITE DEVELOPMENTS

- Cleaned, cleared and begun constructing the Adventure Playground.
- With the help of pupils, planted over 700 trees, and numerous native plant species - including Wild Roses, Irises and Grasses.
- Installed a site-wide drip irrigation system.
- Created a Visitors Centre Garden to manage the visitors.



Playground construction



Planting



Irrigation works



Spring - Empty



Summer - Abundant



GREENHOUSES

- Cleaned, cleared and prepared 3 greenhouses, with a lot of hard work.
- Built water storage, enriched the soil, fenced and protected the growing space.
- Extended a growing area to include 'summer growing area'.
- Produced diverse range of flowers and vegetable crops.
- Involved the children in aspects of the growing.
- Produced many Kilos of delicious organic vegetables which then went to the school kitchen.



Proud Head Gardener

LANDSCAPE TEAM



Angdus - Construction Manager



Lundup - JCB Driver



Tsetan - Head Gardener



2013 Team with UK Landscape Architects



Landscape Manager.....Who Will it Be????



Phunsok - Tipper Truck Driver and Chef



Lobsang - Caretaker, Master Tea-Maker and Irrigation Guru



Dorje - Assistant Gardener and Grafter



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WE ARE IN NEED OF FUNDS TO BRING THIS VISION TO LIGHT
YOU CAN DONATE VIA THE DRUK WHITE LOTUS SCHOOL WEBSITE
WWW.DWLS.ORG



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